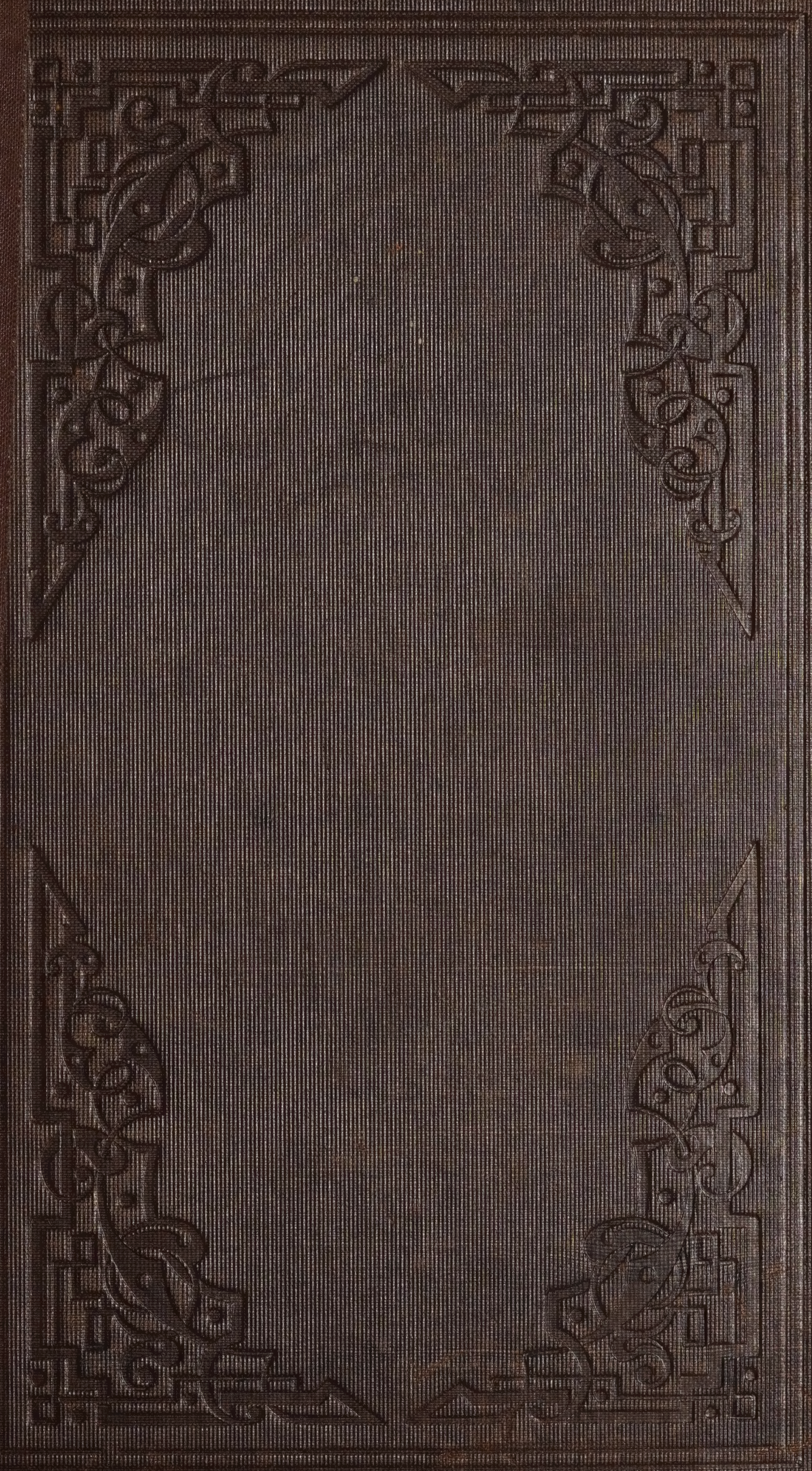

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THE METHOD

OF

THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT.

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THE METHOD

OF

THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT,

PHYSICAL AND MORAL.

BY

JAMES M'COSH, LL.D.,

PROFESSOR OF LOGIC AND METAPHYSICS IN THE QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY FOR IRELAND.

Fourth Edition.

NEW YORK:
ROBERT CARTER & BROTHERS,
No. 530 BROADWAY.
1857.

"That to the height of this great argument
I may assert Eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to men."

MILTON'S PARADISE LOST.

PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION.

We live in an age in which the reflecting portion of mankind are much addicted to the contemplation of the works of nature. It is the object of the author, in this Treatise, to " interrogate nature," with the view of inducing her to utter her voice in answer to some of the most momentous questions which the inquiring spirit of man can put.

He thinks it needful to state, thus early, that he proceeds on the inductive method in his inquiry, and not, on the one hand, after the plan of those British Rationalists, who set out with a preconceived system, which they dignify with the name of Rational, and then accommodate all that they see to it; nor, on the other hand, of those German Intuitionalists, who boast that they can construct the existing universe by *à priori* speculation.

To guard against misapprehension, he wishes it to be understood, that he treats in this book of the Method of the Divine Government in the world, rather than in the Church; of the ordinary providence of God, rather than his extraordinary dealings towards his redeemed people.

The reader of severe taste will be inclined to regard the Introductory Book as too loose and discursive; and all the apology that the author has to offer is, that he was afraid of driving back the general reader, by leading him into the minutiæ before he had contemplated nature under its general aspect.

The general reader, on the other hand, may be disposed to complain, that the style of discussion followed in some of the Sections and Notes of the Second and Third Books, is of too abstruse a character. He has to justify himself to such, by stating, that he did not feel at liberty, in such an age as this to avoid grappling with any of the difficulties which fell in his way, and that he has attempted, by the principles of a deeper philosophy, to confute the wrong conclusions drawn by a superficial philosophy. He has so constructed his work, that the general reader may pass over the more abstract portions (as, for instance, some of the Illustrative Notes) without losing the train of argument.

It is due to the memory of the late Dr. Chalmers to acknowledge, that had not the author enjoyed the inestimable privilege of sitting for four or five sessions at the feet of this illustrious man, in the University of Edinburgh, he would, in all probability, never have had his thoughts directed in the train which he has followed, and have been without the spirit which he has sought to cultivate, as he would certainly have been without not a few of the principles which he has carried along with him in his investigations. It is with no feeling of presumption that he thinks it proper to add, that did he not imagine that he has some truth to communicate, not contained in the works of Dr. Chalmers, he should not have obtruded himself on the public notice, as it could never have occurred to him, that he was able to state the ideas of his eloquent preceptor so clearly or impressively as he has done himself, in his writings now so extensively circulated.

He has to acknowledge his obligations to Principal Cunningham, to Professor Buchanan, and to the Rev. Dr. Hanna, for the kind encouragement which they gave him to proceed with this work, when submitted to them for their counsel; as also to the two last-mentioned gentlemen and the Rev. John Mackenzie, Ratho, for their judicious assistance in overlooking the sheets as they passed through the press.

BRECHIN *January* 1850.

PREFACE TO FOURTH EDITION.

In preparing this edition, the author has subjected the work to a thorough revision. His aim has been to leave out all that is of temporary, and to retain only what is of permanent interest. Without sensibly increasing the volume, he has introduced new discussions on topics of some importance, both in their theological and philosophical bearings.

As being in circumstances to support them by a large body of facts, he has given in Book Second an epitome of his views and published observations in regard to the forms and colours of plants.

In the Third Book, in consequence of having attained, by farther reflection, clearer views of some ethical points, he has modified some of the statements of former editions.

In the Appendix he has reluctantly felt it to be his duty to venture a protest against certain principles set forth by the greatest metaphysicians of the age.

Belfast, *May* 1855.

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THE METHOD

OF

THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT.

METHOD OF THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT

BOOK FIRST.

GENERAL VIEW OF THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT AS FITTED TO THROW LIGHT ON THE CHARACTER OF GOD.

CHAP. I.—INTRODUCTION.

SECT. I.—THE DIFFERENT CLASSES OF OBJECTS FROM WHICH WE DERIVE OUR IDEA OF GOD.

SUPPOSE that the sun, rising and setting as at present, had been perpetually hid from the eye by an intervening cloud or shade which concealed his body without obstructing his beams, there might still have been a universal impression that a great luminary existed as the cause of the light which daily illuminated our globe. Different persons might have fixed on different objects, as reflecting the light of heaven most impressively; some on the fleecy or gilded clouds; others on the lively verdure of the grass and forests, or on the cerulean ocean, or on the rich grain of autumn glistening in the golden beams; but all would have rejoiced to conclude, that there was a sun behind the veil.

Though God is invisible to the bodily eye—though he is, as it were, behind a veil—yet the idea of his existence is pressed on the mind from a variety of quarters. Were it not so, the apprehension of, and belief in, a supernatural power or being would not be so universally entertained. The mind that refuses the light which comes from one region, is obliged to receive that which comes from another quarter of the heavens or earth. It may be interesting to trace to its sources the most important conception which the mind of man can form.

FIRST, THERE ARE THE ORDER AND ADAPTATION EXHIBITED IN THE SEPARATE MATERIAL WORKS OF GOD.

An acquaintance with the depths or the heights of science is not needful, in order to enable mankind to appreciate this argument. Every person who has observed the springing of the grass and grain and the budding of flowers, who has taken but a passing survey of his own bodily frame, or of the motions of the heavenly bodies, has had the idea impressed upon his mind of reigning order and wisdom. The harmonious colours, and the typical forms of plants and animals, everywhere meeting and delighting the eyes; the mathematical shapes—as in the hexagonal cells of the bee-hive, and the numerical relations of parts—as in the organs of flowers, which are ever furnishing a pleasant exercise to the intellect; all shew that the forces of nature move in numbered squadrons, with measured step, and on a predetermined plan, as if under the command of a presiding intelligence. This argument from the order of the universe was fondly dwelt on by the ancient theists, as delivering them from the two phantoms so dreaded by them—a capricious chance and an unrelenting fate. It has been left very much out of sight of late years in works on natural theology, but must come once more into prominence, now that it is being demonstrated that every part of the skeleton of the plant and animal is constructed after a model form.*

The argument derived from the mutual adaptation of independent natural objects, whereby they co-operate to fulfil an obvious end, has been more frequently urged within the last age or two, and contains still more satisfactory proof of the existence of a personal God. Socrates, representing in this, as he did in everything else, the philosophy of profound common sense—such as shrewd, observant, unsophisticated men in all ages have delighted in—has led the way in the statement of this branch of the evidence. "Is not the providence of God manifested in a remarkable manner, inasmuch as the eye of man, which is so delicate in its structure, hath provided for it eyelids like doors for protection, and which extend themselves whenever it is needful, and again close when sleep approaches?" "Is it not worthy of admiration that the ears should take in sounds of every sort, and yet not be too much filled with them?" "That the foreteeth of the animal should be formed in such a manner as is evidently best fitted for the cutting of its food, as those on the side are adapted for grinding it to pieces?"

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* This new and most interesting subject will be found partially illustrated in Book II. Chap. IV.

It is pleasant to reflect that God hath so arranged his providence, and so constituted mankind, that it does not require an aquaintance with abstruse science to enable them to rise to a knowledge of God. The boy who has marked the instincts of birds in building their nests; the shepherd who has watched the habits of his flocks and herds, and of the beasts of prey that attack them; the peasant who has attended to the migration of the swallow, the cuckoo, or any other favourite bird, or who has noted the working of bees, their government and order in the hive in which he and his family feel so deep an interest; have all seen enough to constrain them to acknowledge that there must be higher intelligence to instruct these creatures, which have manifestly nothing in themselves beyond blind and unreasoning instinct. But while scientific attainment is not necessary in order to produce the conviction in the first instance, it is gratifying to find that research, in every department of nature, multiplies the evidence, and exhibits an ever-increasing number of fresh adaptations. Every new discovery in science yields its contribution to the proofs and illustrations of the wisdom, the power, and goodness of God. This scientific argument was prosecuted, as far as ancient physics admitted, by Cicero in his Treatise on the Nature of the Gods; in modern times, it was followed out by Derham and Ray; at a later date, Paley became its most elegant and judicious expounder; and it has kept pace with modern science in the Bridgewater Treatises, and in the more fragmentary works of Sir Charles Bell, and other writers.

There is nothing abstruse, complicated, or mysterious in the chain of reasoning which leads us to believe in a supernatural intelligence, or rather in the single link which connects the works of God and the worker. It is represented by Dr. Thomas Reid, as containing in its logical form two propositions—the major, that design may be traced from its effects; and the minor, that there are appearances of design in the universe.* It is one of the most common of all kinds of reasoning, and is altogether suited to man's habits of observing and thinking. Every man is obliged to proceed on the argument, in the acquisition of necessary secular knowledge, and in the discharge of the ordinary business of life.

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* "The argument from final causes," says Dr. Reid, "when reduced to a syllogism, has these two premises. First, that design and intelligence in the cause

may with certainty be inferred from marks or signs of it in the effect. This is the principle we have been considering, and we may call it the major proposition of the argument. The second, which we call the minor proposition, is, that there are in fact the clearest marks of design and wisdom in the works of nature; and the conclusion is, that the works of nature are the effects of a wise and intelligent cause. One must either assent to the conclusion, or deny one or other of the premises." (Essay vi. c. vi.) The French Atheistical school, headed by M. Aug. Comte, would at times cast doubts on the second proposition, and explain away some of the supposed marks of design, dwelt upon by writers on natural theology. But in doing so, it may be remarked invariably, that they only succeed in referring a given adaptation to a more general cause; and they do not seem to reflect that we are ready to follow them thither, and to point out the adaptation *there*, possibly under a double form, or one adaptation adjusted so as to produce another. When we point, for instance, to the eye, as showing such thought, such care, such refinement, such advantage taken of the properties of natural agents, "and fitted," as Sir John Herschel remarks, "to force upon us a conviction of deliberate choice and premeditated design, more strongly perhaps than any single contrivance to be found in nature or art," the Atheist contents himself with saying, that the eye is produced by that law of nature according to which children resemble their parents; and he forgets that we follow him from the child to the parent, and there discover the very same adaptation; with this farther adaptation, that the parent's frame is so constructed as to be able to produce an offspring after his own likeness. And all the miserable cavils of the Atheistical school leave a host of traces of design undenied and even untouched. As the second proposition cannot be denied with any appearance of plausibility, they set themselves with most vigour to attack the first, and represent all the apparent traces of design as mere "conditions of existence." "The provision made for the stability of the solar system," says M. Comte, "is no evidence of a final cause. The pretended final cause reduces itself, as has been seen on all analogous occasions, to this puerile observation—there are no stars inhabited but those that are habitable. They return, in a word, to the principle of the conditions of existence, which is the true positive transformation of the doctrine of final causes, and of which the fertility and bearing are vastly greater." If there be any logical force in this remark, it must be held as affirming that no adjustments, however numerous and strikingly applied to secure an end, can be held as evidential of design. Now let us apply this to the common illustration. We lift a watch, found lying on a bare common, and examine it, and are about to conclude that it must have had a maker, when M. Comte comes to us and assures us that all this adaptation of wheel and axle, of hand and figure, is but the condition of the existence of the watch. True, it is the condition of the existence of the watch, but it is a proof too of a designing mind arranging the condition. We certainly hold the remark to be sufficiently "puerile," and the sneer reared upon it to be sufficiently profane. "At this present time, for minds properly familiarized with true astronomical philosophy, the heavens dis-

SECONDLY, THERE ARE THE RELATIONS WHICH THE PHYSICAL WORLD BEARS TO MAN, WHICH WE CALL THE PROVIDENTIAL ARRANGEMENTS OF THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT.

In observing these, the mind rises beyond mere isolated material objects and laws, and even beyond the relations between them, to contemplate the grand results in the dealings of God towards his creatures. It is to this latter class of facts that the majority of mankind look, rather than to the other. An extended observation of the nice adjustments in material objects requires a kind of microscopic eye and a habit of fixed attention, such as are not possessed by the great body of mankind; who look not so much to these as to prominent events cognizable by the senses without any minute inspection, and which indeed force themselves upon the attention;—the providential care of God, and the restraints of his government, being not so much isolated adaptations, as the grand results in their bearings upon mankind to which these adaptations lead. The common mind, unaccustomed to dissection, can pursue the scientific argument, and the observation on which it proceeds, but a very little way; but this other it can prosecute to a great length. Inquire into the ground of the belief in the existence of God, entertained by the working man or man of business, and you will probably find it, not an ingenious inspection of his own frame or of any material object, but an observation of the care which God takes of him, and of the judgments with which from time to time he visits the world. It is this more obvious observation which falls in most readily with his habitual train of thought and feeling, and which comes home most powerfully to his heart and experience.

The argument under this second head is not different in its logical nature from the former; but the class of objects on which it is founded is different. It is, as we apprehend, the class of

play no other glory than that of Hipparchus, of Kepler, of Newton, and of all who have helped to establish these laws." No persons were more willing to admit than the parties here named, that the laws which they discovered must have existed before they could discover them,—that the glory belongs to Him who established these laws, and *to them* but the reflected glory of having first interpreted them to mankind. Once admit, as we think the rational mind cannot but admit, that adjustments towards a given end, if sufficiently numerous and striking, may be held as proving the existence of a designing mind, and the number and nature of such adjustments in the universe will at once force upon us the conclusion, that this world is under a presiding intelligence.—(See Pos. Phil. vol. ii. pp. 28, 39.)

phenomena now referred to, which raises the mind to the idea of a God *above nature and ruling over it.* "As the consideration of nature," says a sagacious thinker, "shows an inherent intelligence, which may also be conceived as coherent with nature, so does history, on a hundred occasions, show an intelligence which is distinct from nature, which conducts and determines those things which may seem to us accidental; and it is not true that the study of history weakens the belief in a divine providence. History is of all kinds of knowledge the one which tends most decidedly to that belief."* There is ground for the remark here made, both as to the effect usually produced by the contemplation of nature, and the impression left by the intelligent contemplation of history. He who confines his attention to the mere structure and laws of physical nature, is apt to speak and think of God as merely a kind of intelligent principle inherent in, and coherent with, nature. It is when we contemplate the dealings of God towards the human race, whether in the events of past history, (to which Niebuhr more particularly refers,) or in those which fall under our observation and experience, that we rise to the idea of a God distinct from nature and above nature, controlling and governing it. "God," says Leibnitz, "has the qualities of a good governor, as well as of a great architect."† The physical inquirer discovers the qualities that indicate the latter of these, and speaks of God as a great architect, as an ingenious mechanician, or an unrivalled artist. It is from a survey of the events of providence, being the combination and results of those laws which the man of science investigates severally, that we rise to enlarged views of the Governor of the universe.

THIRDLY, THERE IS THE HUMAN SOUL, WITH ITS CONSCIOUSNESS, ITS INTELLIGENCE, AND ITS BENIGN FEELINGS.

A reference is made to these at present, not as the agents by which the process of proof is conducted, but as the objects contemplated, and on which the proof rests. The human reason, with its intuitive or logical laws, must be the instrument employed in every branch of the argument, and whatever be the data on which it proceeds; but in the case now before us, reason finds its data in the mind itself.

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* Niebuhr's Lectures, vol. i. p. 146.

† Essays on the Goodness of God, P. iii.

It is never to be forgotten, that, apart from a reflex contemplation of the human mind, it is impossible to rise to the conception of a living and intelligent God. It is in the soul, small though it be when compared with the object reflected, that we are to discover most distinctly represented the image of a spiritual God. Without taking human consciousness and intelligence and feeling into view, God could be conceived of as a mere principle of mechanism or order in nature, as a power of fate, or a law of development in or above nature, (as with Schelling,) rather than a real and living agent. It is the possession of consciousness and intelligent purpose by man that suggests the idea of a conscious and a personal God. From what we have ourselves experienced, we know that intelligence is needful, in order to produce such effects as exist in nature around us; and thence we rise in our conceptions to a living soul presiding over the universe and regulating it, not according to a mere law of mechanism or development, but by the wisdom of spiritual intelligence and love.

The very existence of the human soul as a created object, which it evidently is, implies an intelligent soul as its creator, and that a soul of vast power and great intelligence. If the creation of the beautiful forms of matter argues an extraordinary power and skill, surely the creation of spiritual intelligent being is fitted to impress us still more with the knowledge and wisdom of the Creator.

Some think that the proof of the existence of God, derived from the mind of man, can be stretched much farther; and they find in the depths of the soul, and among its necessary ideas, what they reckon the most solid and conclusive of all arguments. There are ideas carrying with them a feeling of necessity, such as those of infinity, of immensity, and eternity, which seem to point to a being necessarily existing, and to whom these qualities can be ascribed as attributes.* But for the purpose at present in view, it is enough to insist that it is by the human consciousness and intelligence that the idea of a personal, a spiritual, and an all-wise God is suggested, and by which there is furnished the most convincing evidence of his being, and of some of his highest perfections.*

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* In musing on divine things, it occurred to the meditative spirit of Anselm, that it might be possible to find a single argument complete in itself, and needing no other for its confirmation. Man is able to form a conception of something, than which nothing greater can be conceived; and Anselm argues, from the very nature of the conception, that this something must exist in reality, as well as in the intelligence. Descartes, in prosecuting his method of proving every other truth from a single principle of consciousness, has constructed a similar argument.

FOURTHLY, THERE ARE THE MORAL QUALITIES OF MAN.

We refer more particularly to the conscience. This conscience is in all men. Man has not only powers of understanding, such as the memory, the imagination, and the judgment—not only feelings and emotions, such as love, hope, fear—he has likewise a higher faculty of sense, which judges by its own law of every other principle of the mind, and claims authority over it. Just as all men think and reason by the powers of the understanding, and as all men feel by their emotional nature, so all men have some sense (it may be very faint and imperfect) of the distinction between good and evil, by means of the moral power or powers with which God has endowed them.

For the proof of the existence of the conscience, we appeal with Butler and Mackintosh to the consciousness. We have only to compare our nature with that of the brute creation, to discover at once that there is some such principle in the human mind. The lower animals we find so far resembling man that they are possessed of certain appetites and propensities, but they have no regulating, in short, no moral principle. Following and gratifying their spontaneous impulses, they find that no blame attaches to them, and that they are troubled by no reproaches or compunctions of conscience. But let man proceed to gratify the

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He argues that the very idea in the mind of the infinite, the perfect, implies the existence of an infinite and a perfect being. Dr. Samuel Clarke has given a more elaborate demonstration. He maintains that, because something now exists, something must have existed from eternity; that there cannot have been from eternity a succession of changeable and dependent beings; and that as the mind cannot get rid of the ideas of infinite space and time, so there must be an infinite and eternal substance of which these are modes. We doubt much whether these ideas or principles in man's mind do of themselves prove the existence of a living God; but when his being has been established otherwise, as by the argument from order and design, they lead us to clothe him with infinite perfections. (See Prosologium of Anselm; Descartes' Method, p. iv., and Meditations, iii.; Clarke on Attributes.)

* See some remarks on the LOGICAL NATURE OF THE THEISTIC ARGUMENT IN APPENDIX I.

appetites and passions of his nature to excess, and in an irregular way, and he meets with some check, (it may be a feeble one,) warning him at the time, and followed by reproach ; something which, if it does not proclaim aloud, at least whispers in accents loud enough to be heard, that he is doing wrong. Unable, it may be, to stem the strong current of the evil passions, this conscience is among them like a breaker in the midst of the stream, which, if it does not stop the torrent, at least announces its own existence and its purpose by the agitation which it produces.

Now, the conscience is a ready and powerful means of suggesting the idea of God to the mind. We believe that it is by it, rather than by any careful observation of nature, material or spiritual, that mankind have their thoughts directed to God. It is not so much by what he sees around him, as by what he feels within, that man is led to believe in a ruler of the world. A conscience speaking as one having authority, and in behalf of God, is the monitor by which he is reminded most frequently and emphatically of his Governor and his Judge.

It seems to be possible to build, upon the very fact of the existence of the conscience, an independent argument in favour of the being of God. The existence of the law in the heart seems to imply the existence of a lawgiver.

Whatever may be thought of this, it is certain that the conscience affords evidence that God, proven on other grounds to exist, must approve of moral excellence. We are constrained to believe that he, who planted the conscience in our bosoms, loves the virtue which it would lead us to love. We are forced to the conclusion, that he who stirred up these reproaches in our breasts, himself hates the sin which they would lead us to hate. By the analogy of human design, we infer in the universe the operation of a mightier designer; and by the analogy of man's moral sentiments, we conclude that the Creator of the universe is possessed of those moral qualities by which he is not only the maker and sustainer of all things, but their righteous Governor and their Judge.

Now, such seem to be the four natural sources from which the human mind derives its idea of the Divine Being.* Viewed separately, the arguments drawn from these sources are not all conclusive, or equally conclusive; one may be considered, perhaps, merely as suggestive, and another as confirmatory; one as a proof of the existence of God, and another as an illustration of the possession of certain attributes.

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* In fact, the idea of God is commonly first suggested by parents or guardians, who, again, may have derived it from tradition or revelation. But when the mind begins to think for itself, it finds evidence and illustration in the way we have pointed out. The Scriptures declare, that some knowledge of God can be derived

Each class of objects furnishes its quota of evidence. The physical works of God give indications of power and skill. The providence of God exhibits a governing and controlling energy. Our spiritual natures lift us to the conception of a living, a personal, and spiritual God.

These three classes of objects, (deferring the consideration of the fourth for a little,) as bringing before us nature animate and inanimate, and the relation between them, establish the benevolence as well as the wisdom of God. The phenomena which prove the existence of God, also demonstrate that he delights in the happiness of his creatures. For it is conceivable that the world might have been filled with adaptations as wonderful as any of the existing ones, but all of them of a diametrically opposite character. The exquisitely formed joints of the animal frame might, in the very delicacy of their organism, have communicated the more exquisite pain. The plants of the earth might have grown to nourish the bodies of animals, only as the food spread through the organs to torture every member. The sunbeams, instead of gladdening all nature, might have struck every living being as with a succession of spear-points to harass and annoy. How delightful to find that every adaptation indicating design also indicates benevolence, and that we have as clear evidence of the goodness as of the very existence of God!

Let it be observed, too, that, proceeding upon these classes of objects, the mind, as its general conceptions expand, will also have its idea of God expanded. When nature is viewed in a narrow spirit, it may leave the impression that there is an unseemly warfare, and that there are numberless contradictions in the universe. The flowers which spring up to-day are blighted on the morrow. The product of the sunshine and the dews is often destroyed by the storms. The winds of heaven, and the waves of the ocean, look at times as if they delighted in contending with each other. Hence we find the heathens placing

from nature, and they come to us as the word of God. Rom. i. 20—"For the visible things of God are clearly seen," &c.

a separate god, with a distinctive character and purpose, over every separate element. There is the god of the rivers, the god of the winds, and the god of the ocean, and these are supposed to feel pleasure in thwarting and opposing each other. The light of knowledge, as it rises, dispels these phantoms, and discloses, among apparent incongruities and contentions, a unity of purpose indicating a unity of being in the Creator and Governor of all things.

Modern research has served to expand this conception by pointing out the links—often invisible at the first glance—which connect every one part of God's works with every other, and thereby demonstrates that all nature has been fabricated by one hand, and is governed by one Lord. It is being established that every part of the plant and animal has been constructed after a pattern form, and that there is a unity of plan running through all organized beings. The same Being who made man, formed, it is evident, the animals which minister to his comfort. Animal life, again, is dependent on vegetable life, and vegetable life is dependent on the soil and atmosphere; and thus the wide earth is seen to be one great whole. But terrestrial objects are also dependent on the seasons, and the seasons are produced by the relation between the earth and the sun; and the great whole is thus enlarged so as to include the sun. The strength of the animal muscles is suited to the size of the earth; and the continued existence of the plants of the earth, and of animal life, is dependent on the length of the day and of the year, and these are occasioned by the laws and adjustments of the solar system. The solar system, again, is manifestly connected in the government of God with other systems; for it appears that our sun is advancing nearer to certain stars, and moving away from others, and that in obedience to laws which regulate other suns and systems of suns. This line of argument stretches out to the most distant parts of the known universe. He who made the muscle of my limb, made the earth on which I walk, and the great luminary round which the earth revolves, and the grand galaxy in which the sun moves. He who made my eye, made the light which comes to it; and he who made the light, made the sun which sheds that light, and also the distant star, which has taken thousands of years to send its rays across the immeasurable space that intervenes.

Such phenomena help us to comprehend, so far as finite creature can comprehend, the omnipresence of God. The human imagination, bold and venturesome though it be, feels as if it could not penetrate the depths of space which astronomy discloses. Its wing becomes weary when it has reached distances which light requires many thousand years to traverse. Geology, again, as has been remarked, does for time what astronomy does for space, and leads back the mind into a past eternity, far as it is able and willing to follow.

And it is not to be overlooked, that, altogether independently of such physical discoveries, the mind, by its own native power, can reach widely into the infinite. " Think of space, we see it stretching beyond the world, beyond our system, beyond the farthest limits of creation ; and every bound we affix to it only carries us to the unbounded beyond. Think of time, all the limits of duration do but suggest the illimitable eternity. Think of dependent existence, and we sink lower and lower from one stage of dependence to another, till we rest only in the independent, the absolute. Think of finite being, what is it but an endless paradox without infinite being ? Think of cause, what does it end in but the *causa causarum*, the spring and source of all things ?"*

" As the idea of God is removed farther from humanity and a scattered polytheism, it becomes more intense and profound as it becomes more universal, for the infinite is present to everything. If I fly into the uttermost parts of the earth, it is there : also, if we turn to the east or the west we cannot escape from it. Man is thus aggrandized in the image of his Maker."†

Still, when it has reached this point, and combined these three classes of phenomena, the human mind is not satisfied, for it feels as if there must be much in the character of God on which these objects can cast little or no light. In particular, it is anxious to know what are his moral qualities, and what the moral relation subsisting between him and man. There are, besides, doubts and perplexities which the mind must entertain, but which it feels that it cannot solve. Why these afflictive dispensations of the Divine Providence? Why such extensive suffering? Why such a separation between man and his Maker? The mind feels as if it must have left some element out of calculation; nor will it rest satisfied till, by the aid of the moral law in the heart, (being the fourth object,) it rises to the contemplation of a God who loves virtue and hates vice, and whose government is all ordered with the view of encouraging the one and discouraging the other, and this by reason of a perfection as essential to his nature as his omnipresence or his benevolence.

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* Morell's Modern Philosophy. Note. 2d Edit. It is at this place, if we do not mistake, that the idea of the Infinite so much dwelt on by the German philosophers, comes in. The capacity of the human mind to form such an idea, or rather its intuitive *belief* in an Infinite, of which it feels that it cannot form an adequate *conception*, may be no proof (as Kant maintains) of the existence of an Infinite Being, but it is, we are convinced, the means by which the mind is enabled to invest the Deity, shewn on other grounds to exist, with the attribute of Infinity ; that is, to look on his being, power, goodness, and all his perfections as infinite.

† Hazlitt.

It requires an observation of the whole of these four classes of objects to convey a full and adequate idea of the Divine character. Leave out the first, and we have no elevating idea of the divine skill and intelligence. Sink the second out of sight, and the God that we acknowledge cannot be distinguished from the universe. Leave out the third, and he becomes a brute unconscious force, or at best a mere name for an aggregate of laws and developments. Discard the fourth class of objects, and we strip him of some of the very brightest rays of his glory, and leave a physical without a moral power, and a weak beneficence unguarded by justice.

When the mind is fixed on any one of these groups to the exclusion of the others, the conception becomes limited, partial, and so far erroneous. When it thinks only of the physical works of nature, it is apt to conceive of their Maker as a mere mechanical power. When confined to his providence, it regards nothing beyond his foresight, his sagacity, and the sovereignty of his will. In looking simply at his spiritual nature, his close and intimate connexion with his creatures is forgotten. When conscience is the sole monitor, he is regarded by his sinful creatures with unmingled feelings of awe and fear. The mere physical inquirer does not rise beyond the idea of skill and contrivance. The believer in an exclusive Providence makes his Deity guilty of favouritism and caprice. Those who look solely to the spiritual nature of God are tempted to remove him into a region of dreamy meditation and useless affection. The religion of conscience lands us in superstition and will-worship.

Not unfrequently a few objects belonging to a particular class are fixed on, and the view may become contracted to the very narrowest point; and God (as among the Caffres) may be regarded as little more than a rain-sender, or there may be nothing beyond a vague conception, suggested by the conscience, of some power that is to be dreaded because of the evil which it may inflict.

The beautiful rays coming from the face of God, and shining in such loveliness around us, are reflected and refracted when they come in contact with the human heart. Each heart is apt to receive only such as please it, and to reject the others. Hence the many-coloured aspects, some of them hideous in the extreme, in which God is presented to different nations and individuals. Hence the room for each man fashioning a god after his own heart. An evil conscience, reflecting only the red rays, calls up a god who delights in blood. The man of fine sentiment, reflecting only the softer rays, exhibits from the hues of his own feelings a god of mere sensibility, tender as that of the hero of a modern romance. The man of glowing imagination will array him in gorgeous but delusive colouring, and in the flowing drapery of majesty and grandeur, beneath which, however, there is little or no reality. The observer of laws will represent him as the embodiment of order, as blank and black as the sun looks when we have gazed upon him till we are no longer sensible of his brightness. It is seldom in the apprehensions of mankind that all the rays so meet as to give us the pure white light, and to exhibit God, full orbed in all his holiness and goodness, as the fountain of lights in whom is no darkness at all.

It is a favourite maxim of not a few living philosophers, as, for example, of M. Cousin, that error is always partial truth. That it frequently is so cannot be doubted. But this circumstance should not be urged, as these parties sometimes employ it, to excuse error. It ought at least to have been remarked, that partial truth is often the most dangerous of all errors. Every one knows how a garbled quotation may be the most effectual perversion of an author's meaning, and how a partial representation of an incident in a man's life may be the most malignant of all calumnies. It is in taking a partial view of truth that human prejudice finds the easiest and most effectual method of gaining its end. If persons do not wish to retain

God in their knowledge, they can easily contrive to form a god to their own taste, by directing their eyes to certain objects, and shutting them to all others.

"Man," says one of the most ingenious and profound writers of these latter days—we mean Vinet—"has never failed to make a god of his own image, and his various religions have never surpassed himself; for, if by these he imposes on himself acts and privations which he would not otherwise impose, those toils which are of his own choice do not raise him above himself. Hence those religions do not change the principles of his inner life: they subject him to an external sway only to leave him free at heart." Our ideas of God thus originating in our own hearts can never be made to rise higher than the fountain from which they have flowed. Hence the need of a revelation from a higher source to make known a God, not after the image of man, but a God after whose image of heavenly descent man may remodel his character, and thereby exalt it to a heavenly elevation and brightness.

Nor will the progress of secular knowledge counteract this native tendency of the human heart. It may direct the stream into a new channel, but it cannot dry up the native propensities of the heart in which this inclination originates. The fundamental human error, which assumes one form in the ruder and uncivilized ages and nations of the world, takes another shape in those countries which have made greater progress in the arts and sciences. Polytheism vanishes only that pantheism may take up its place; and the sole difference between them is, that while many errors lodge in the former, all errors take refuge in the latter. God ceases to be regarded with superstitious awe; but it is only that he may be esteemed a mechanical force, a philosophic abstraction, or a splendid imagination, as gorgeous, but as unsolid too, as a gilded cloud. In the former case, God did possess an influence on the character, at times for evil, but at times for good: under these latter aspects, he exercises no influence whatever, but is a nonentity in power, as he is conceived to be a nonentity in reality.

Of the four sources from which mankind derive their idea of God, the first and the third are attended to with greater or less care by the thinking mind of the present day. Hence we find that, in the common views of the Divine Being, there are exalted conceptions of his power, wisdom, and goodness, and of his nature as a spiritual intelligence. It may be doubted, however, whether the second and fourth classes of objects have been so habitually contemplated, or whether they have not, to some extent at least, been overlooked. In some former ages it might have been more needful to elevate the popular view of the Divine intelligence and goodness and spirituality, by means of the works of God in the physical and mental worlds. In the present age it may be more beneficial, after the light which has been thrown on these topics, to direct attention to the phenomena which speak of the wise, the benevolent, and righteous Governor. At certain times, and in certain countries, the religion of authority and the religion of conscience have had too extensive sway; but in modern Europe, with the bonds of government loosened,* and the free assertion of the rights of man, there has been a greater tendency to sink the qualities of the Governor and the Judge. We propose in this Treatise to give the Government of God its proper place, and bring it out into full and prominent relief.

SECT. II.—OBJECT OF THIS TREATISE; INVESTIGATION OF THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD, AND THE CONSCIENCE OF MAN, OR THE EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL GOVERNMENT OF GOD.

There are two important classes of phenomena to pass under notice in this Treatise.

The first is presented in the physical world in its relation to the constitution and character of man, or what we may call the providence of God.

The second is presented in the constitution and character of man in their relation to God, and more particularly the moral faculty or moral sense. We use this general language, because, so far as the object at present contemplated is concerned, we do not care by what name this moral quality of our nature may be designated—whether it be called the moral sense or the moral faculty—the conscience, or the law in the heart. By whatever name it may be distinguished, this property is certainly one of the most wondrous in our mental constitution. The workings of conscience in the soul, besides furnishing a curious subject of inquiry, carry us down into the very depths of our nature, and thence upwards to some of the highest of the Divine perfections.

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* Thiers says, that now "kings reign, but do not govern."

The external and internal governments of God are thus to pass under review; and truly we know not how the full character of God can be gathered from his works without a careful survey of both these departments of his operations.

A great number of works, distinguished for learning and ability, have been written in our age to demonstrate the existence of God, and illustrate such perfections of his nature as his power, his benevolence, and his wisdom. But while these treatises have established to the satisfaction of every mind capable of conviction that a God exists, and that he is possessed of a certain class of attributes, the most of them do not exhibit, and do scarcely profess to exhibit, to our view the complete character of God. Natural theologians have drawn the proper inference from the particular laws and nice adaptations of part to part to which their attention has been called; but they have not studied the general combinations, or the grand results in the providence of God; and the view which they have given of the Divine character is contracted, because their field of observation is narrow and confined. Enlarging the sphere of vision, and viewing the separate machinery as combined in God's providence, we hope to rise to a fuller and more complete conception of the character of God, than can possibly be attained by those whose attention has been confined to isolated fragments and particular laws, such as fall under the eye of the physical inquirer, or of the theologians who use the materials which physical research has furnished.

Natural theology is the science which, from an investigation of the works of nature, would rise to a discovery of the character and will of God, and of the relation in which man stands to him. In prosecuting this science, the inquirer proceeds, (or should proceed,) in the same way as he does in every other branch of investigation. He sets out in search of facts; he arranges and co-ordinates them, and rising from the phenomena which present themselves to their cause, he discovers, by the ordinary laws of evidence, a cause of all subordinate causes. But in following such a method it is required that we do not overlook any of the more important facts. An omission of an essential circumstance in the premises, or in taking down the data of the problem, must issue in a perplexing defect or fatal blunder in the result.

There is nothing wonderful in the circumstance, that the theologians of nature have not, in their researches, seen the higher moral qualities of God; for they could not expect to find any traces of them in the territories which they have visited. When we wish to ascertain the moral character of a fellow-man, we look to something else than his mere works of mechanical and intellectual skill. These can exhibit nothing but those qualities from which they have sprung—the ability of the hand or of the understanding; and when we are bent on knowing his character, we inquire into the use which he makes of his talents, and of the products and results of them, and generally into his conduct towards other beings, towards God and towards man. Our natural theologians have acquired about as enlarged and accurate a view of the higher perfections of the Divine Being, as they might obtain of the moral and religious character of an architect by inspecting the building which he had planned; of an artisan by examining the watch constructed by him; or of a husbandman, by walking over the field which he has cultivated. A visit paid to the workshop of an ingenious mechanic may bring under our notice all the qualities of the fine workman; but meanwhile, we have no materials to guide us in forming an idea of his kindness or his integrity, his temperance or his godliness. In order to discover whether he possesses these qualities, we must inquire into the use which he makes of the fruits of his ingenuity; we must follow him into the busy market and the social circle, into his family and his closet. Now, if we would discover the infinitely glorious moral perfections of the Supreme Being, we must in like manner enter other regions than those into which the mere classifier of the laws of nature would conduct us. In investigating the laws of inanimate nature, we may expect to find—and we do find—innumerable traces of lofty intelligence; in examining the different parts of the animal frame, we may hope to find marks—and we discover them in abundance—of that benevolence which makes the possessor delight in the happiness of sentient being; but if we would discover the justice and holiness of God, and the qualities which distinguish the righteous and benevolent Governor, we must look to the bearing of his works and dispensations on the state and character of man.

In conducting this inquiry, we shall find ourselves in the midst of a topic of most momentous import, but from which modern scientific men have generally drawn back, as if they felt unable or unwilling to grapple with it, because too high for their understanding to rise to it, or too humbling to their pride to stoop down to it. The subject referred to is the relation in which God stands towards man. Our literati and secular philosophers are, in general, willing to acknowledge that a God exists; but they have very confused and ill-assorted ideas as to the relation in which he stands towards the human race. Yet surely this latter subject is not inferior in philosophical interest or practical importance to the other, or indeed to any other. The character of God cannot well be understood by us till we consider it in its relation to man. How do I stand in reference to that Being, of whose greatness and goodness I profess to entertain such lofty ideas? How does He stand affected towards me? We know not if the settlement of the question of the existence of God be to us of greater moment than the settlement of this other question, What is the relation in which we stand to Him? This is certain, that the settlement of the one question should instantly lead to the settlement of the other; and the inquirer has stopped half-way, and acquires little that is truly valuable, nothing satisfactory to the heart, till he pursue his researches into this second field which lies contiguous to the other.

This second inquiry must bring under our special notice and consideration the character of man, not, it is true, metaphysically or analytically, or in all its aspects, but in its bearings towards God. The consideration of the nature of man, and more particularly of his moral qualities, will again conduct us upward to the contemplation of the rectitude or the moral excellence of God. It is by placing the two together, the character of God and the character of man, as it were in juxtaposition, the one over against the other, that we can best understand both. This relation of God and man, the one towards the other, is the department of divine and human knowledge in which, in our humble opinion, this generation has most need to be instructed.

We live in an age which boasts of its light and knowledge; but it may be doubted how far those who are most disposed to be vain-glorious, have, after all, very deep or comprehensive views of the character of the Deity. We laugh at the narrow and superstitious views entertained of God by savage nations, and in the darker ages of the history of the world; but perhaps we might be as profitably employed in inquiring whether we have ourselves attained to ideas that are correct and adequate.

In this, or indeed in any age, there are comparatively few disposed absolutely to deny the existence of a superior or a supreme Being. We would not say that the idea of, and belief in, the existence of God are innate in, or connate with, the human soul; but they are the natural result of the exercise of the human faculties and intuitions in the circumstances in which man is placed. Degraded though man be, he shrinks from Atheism with almost as strong an aversion as he does from annihilation. Mankind cannot be brought to believe, that there are not traces in the world of something higher than blind fate and the freaks of chance. Their felt weakness, their very pride, cannot brook the thought of there being no presiding power to overlook their destiny. There are, besides, certain periods of helplessness in every man's life, when the soothing accents of human affection cannot be found, or, what is worse, can afford no comfort; and then the heart, whatever may be the sophistries with which the head is warped, will insist on believing that there is a God who sympathizes with us and pities us. Rather than abandon the thought that some Being above nature is interested in them, mankind will assume that the heavenly bodies have some mysterious communication with the earth; that the sun goes round the whole globe just to see their actions; that there are planets presiding over their birth, and determining their life and death; or they will people the woods and the darkness of night with spirits, and reckon the breezes their whispers of communication regarding us, and the storms the expression of their indignation against those who have offended them. If for ever without a companion, man would sometimes prefer an unpleasant one; and, on a like principle, he would worship a god supposed to be possessed of many hideous qualities, rather than be driven to regard this universe as a blank and uninhabited void.

But while man is led naturally to believe in God, he is not led so naturally to entertain just and spiritual conceptions of his character. It is a fact, that almost all nations have retained some idea of a god, but it is also a fact, explain it as we please, that all nations have fallen into the most unworthy conceptions of his nature and connexion with the human race. We believe the second of these facts to be the natural result of man's character, as much as the other. False religions, appearing in every age and nation, have assumed forms as varied as the tastes and prejudices, as the habits and manners of mankind, or as the climates in which they lived, but all tending to darken and degrade the purity of the Divine nature.

Man must have a god; but he forms his own god, and he makes it a god after his own image. Instead of forming his own character after the likeness of God, he would fashion a god after his own likeness. It appears that at a very early age in the history of the world, there was a tendency to carnalize the Divine character by representing it in symbol;—in brute symbol, as among the ancient Egyptians; in the more glorious of the inanimate works of God, as among the Persians; and in images of man's own construction, as among the majority of nations. The very beauty of the works of God stole away men's minds from the author, and they lifted up an eye, first of reverence, and then of worship, to the sun and moon and host of heaven, considered by the philosophers as emanations of Deity, and by the multitude as the deities themselves. Others were more impressed with the heroic and the ancient, and deified the heroes of bygone ages, the renowned warriors of their country, the promoters of the arts and sciences. So strong was this desire to bring down celestial things to the level of terrestrial things, that in the Egyptian mythology heaven was merely a celestial Egypt, watered by a celestial Nile, lightened by a celestial sun, and divided into the same number of gnomes as the earthly country, and each of these the peculiar residence of the god worshipped in the corresponding district of the terrestrial Egypt. Error, as it advanced, grew in waywardness and strength, till, in the ages of Homer and Hesiod, the prevailing religions of Europe became completely anthropomorphic; and Mars was just the embodiment of the popular admiration of warlike achievement, and Venus that of the popular conception of love. So complete at length did this adaptation to human nature become, that thieves have had their patron god in Mercury, and the Thugs divinities pleased with the murders which they committed.

The Greek philosopher Xenophanes, ridiculing this anthropomorphic spirit, was in the way of referring satirically to the Ethiopians, who represented their gods with flat noses, and as of a black colour, and to the Thracians, who gave them blue eyes and ruddy complexions. It may be doubted, however, whether the philosophers themselves rose above this natural tendency. The Stoic divinities are just a personification of the stern method of the Stoic character; and the idle pleasure-loving gods of the Epicureans are the expression of the tastes and desires of the votaries of that philosophy.

In ancient Judea, and in certain modern nations, the people have been kept from falling into such errors, by what professes to be a revelation from heaven. What philosophy never could have effected, so far as the great body of the people is concerned, has been accomplished by what appeared to the subtle Greek as foolishness. In our own country, the light of heaven has been let in upon the dark groves where our forefathers offered human sacrifices, and all ghostly terrors have vanished before it. But error has not always disappeared when it has changed its forms. While the old body remains, it can suit its dress to the fashion of the time and place. Our hearts would now revolt at the very idea of bowing the knee to an idol chiselled by Phidias himself. With minds enlarged by extended knowledge, we choose rather to exalt the character of God; for the more elevated he is, the less is our pride offended by being obliged to pay him honour. But while the popular conception of his character never omits these his physical attributes of power, omnipresence, and eternity, it is a question worthy of being put and answered, whether it does not leave out other qualities equally essential to his nature, such as holiness, righteousness, and grace—that is, undeserved mercy bestowed in consistency with justice. We fear that there is something repulsive to many in these phrases; no, not in the phrases themselves, but in the very idea which these words embody, and which cannot be expressed in all their depth of meaning by any others. While man wishes to believe that there is a God, he does not feel delight in contemplating a God of infinite purity; and the mind turns away from the view as the eye does from the full splendour of the noonday sun. It thus happens, that while mankind do wish to believe that there is a God, they do not wish to believe in the living and true God.

They love to dwell on an existing God, but they do not love the contemplation of the actually existing God. Driven by these opposing impulses—now by the one, and now by the other—the religious history of the world is a very vacillating, as well as a very melancholy one. Man is ever fondly clinging to the idea of a God; and ever endeavouring, at the same time, to bring that idea into accordance with his own wishes, his narrow interests and character. The religious history of mankind may be summed up in this—that it is a continually repeated attempt to adapt the character of God to those who feel that they cannot do without him.

It is worthy of being inquired, whether this strong tendency of our nature may not be at work in this present age, as it has been operating in all past ages; and whether our literary and scientific men are not holding forth to themselves and to the popular view the Divine Being shorn of some of the brightest of his perfections, because too dazzling to their eyes; whether the God adored by some be not as different from the truly existing God as the gods of the heathens were: be not, in short, the creature of men's imagination, just as truly as the images worshipped in idolatrous nations are the workmanship of men's hands.

Taking a wider range than the writers on natural theology are wont to do, and embracing within our view a larger field, we hope to rise, by means of the very works of God, to a grander and more elevated conception of the Divine character than those have attained who look to mere physical facts and laws. The inquiry will present numberless proofs of universal wisdom and benevolence. When we enter this council-chamber of the Lord of the universe, we shall find clearer evidence of a distinct affection of love reigning in his bosom, than can possibly be discovered from the adaptations of inanimate nature, and of the functions and limbs of animals which constitute, as it were, the mere outworks of nature. We shall rise beyond law to life, and beyond life to love. Mounting still higher, we shall pass beyond even love, and reach a moral principle, or rather a moral purpose and affection. In judging of human character we distinguish between the man of mere tenderness of nerve and sensibility, and the man of virtue; and in studying the Divine government, we shall have occasion to shew that God is distinguished not only by his beneficence, but also by his holiness and justice.

Nor will we disguise, from the very commencement of this Treatise, that we expect to establish, by a large induction, that the views given by the works of God of the character of their Maker and Governor, do most thoroughly harmonize with the doctrines contained in that book which professes to be a revelation of God's will to man. On rising from the common treatises which have been written on the subject of natural theology and ethical philosophy, every intelligent reader has felt as if the view there given of the Deity was different from what is disclosed in that book which claims to be the Word of God; in short, as if the God of natural was different from the God of revealed religion. Persons who take their views of God from mere scientific treatises, and the current literature, are apt to feel as if the God of the Bible was too stern and gloomy. An acute thinker of the present day speaks of "the dark shadow of the Hebrew God," and the phrase is significant of the feelings cherished by multitudes who breathe and live in the lighter literature of our age. On the other hand, persons who adopt their ideas of God's character from the volume of inspiration, are apt to regard the representations of Deity in works of natural theology as meagre and unsatisfactory in the extreme. All who have sipped of our current literature, or drunk into our science, and then turned to the Bible, have felt this discrepancy, though they may not be able to state wherein it consists. That felt difference cannot be expressed so fully, we think, as by one word frequently employed in Scripture, but carefully banished from the phraseology of scientific theology; that word is HOLINESS —a phrase denoting one of the most essential of the Divine attributes, but to which no reference is made by the common writers on natural religion. If traces of this property of the Divine nature are to be found anywhere in the works of God, they are to be discovered, it is manifest, in the dealings and dispensations of God towards the human race, and in the moral law inscribed by him on every human breast.

If these views be substantiated by the considerations to be adduced, there will thereby be furnished a link to connect the works with the Word of God, and natural with revealed religion; there will be a bridge to join two territories, which have been separated by a wide chasm. If it be true that the Divine government of God, rightly interpreted, gives the same view of the character of God, and the relation in which he stands to man, as the New Testament, then we have a strong and very satisfactory evidence in favour of the divine origin of the Scriptures, and the religion embodied in them. The events of history, the observations of travellers, and the testimony of unimpeachable witnesses, have all been made to yield their quota of evidence in behalf of the truth of Christianity; we are now to inquire, if some important corroborative proof may not be supplied, by the method of the Divine administration in the world without and the world within us.

We are to be engaged in reading, it must be acknowledged, the half-effaced writing on columns sadly broken and disjointed, showing but the ruins of their former grandeur; nevertheless, with care, we trust to be able to decipher sufficient to prove, that the writing is of the same import as that brighter and clearer revelation which God has given of himself in the volume of his Word; and by their sameness, to demonstrate that both have been written by the same unerring hand.

CHAPTER II.

GENERAL ASPECT OF THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT; PHENOMENA PRESENTED BY THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD AND THE CONSCIENCE OF MAN, THOUGH COMMONLY OVERLOOKED.

SECT. I.—PHENOMENA OFTEN OMITTED.—THE EXISTENCE OF EXTENSIVE SUFFERING BODILY AND MENTAL.

An inhabitant of a distant part of our world or of another world, let us suppose, visits Europe, and inspects some of our finer cathedrals, such as that of York or Cologne. Admiring the buildings, he is led to inquire narrowly into their architecture, and he observes how stone is fitted to stone, and buttress to that which it supports, and how all the parts are in beautiful adaptation one to another. Does he know all about these cathedrals, when he has completed this class of observations? In one sense, he knows everything; he knows that the building material of the one is a species of limestone, and of the other, trachyte; every stone and pillar and window has been examined by him, and he has admired the beautiful proportions of the whole fabric. But if he has gone no further in his inquiries, he has but a meagre idea, after all, of these temples. There are higher questions: What is the use of this chapter-house? of this crypt? of this lovely chapel or chancel? The stranger has no proper idea of the cathedrals, till, rising beyond the minute inspection of stones, and columns, and aisles, he contemplates the grand results and uses, and observes, how this part was for the burial of the distinguished dead—this other part for the kneeling of the worshippers—this third part for the convocation of the priests—this fourth part for the dispensation of the holiest rite of the Christian Church—and the whole for the worship of God.

Now, we hold that the investigator of the mere facts and laws of nature is engaged in a work resembling that of this supposed visitant, when he is examining the stones and arches of the building. We are not inclined to depreciate this work of the scientific inquirer, and we are not doing so when we maintain, that if he would rise to a correct view of the character of God, he must enlarge the sphere of his vision; his eye and his mind must take in other phenomena, and he must look at the object served by this temple, (for such it is,) whose architecture he has been observing and admiring.

In investigating these two topics—the providence of God, and the moral principles of man's nature—we trust to rise above the inadequate conceptions of the Divine character so commonly entertained in the present age; we shall ascend beyond mechanism to life, beyond laws to a lawgiver, and beyond even legislation to an active and orderly government, with its judicial and executive departments. Instead of an image of marble set up on a pedestal by the hands of man to be admired, we shall contemplate a living and reigning king seated upon a throne, wielding authority over, and issuing commands to, all creatures.

This world is not in the state in which the intelligent and benevolent mind would have expected it to be *a priori*. Let the problem be: given a God of infinite power and wisdom, to determine the character of the world which he would fashion—and man's solution would present a very different world from the actual one. True, the problem is confessedly of too high an order for human intellect to solve it correctly; but every approximation which he makes, only impresses him the more with wonder, awe, and fear, when he compares the results at which he arrives with the actual results—as we must believe them—of heavenly intelligence and love, in the existing world in which he is placed.

We maintain that the solution of this mystery is to be found, so far as it can be found, in the careful consideration of the departments of God's works in which the mystery appears. The mystery, as existing in the government of God, demands a more earnest investigation of that government; and underneath the very folds of the mystery, we may discover the truths which conduct to a right explanation.

" They that deny the depravity of human nature are involved in perplexity, and speak of the subject of the Divine government with such doubt, confusion, and embarrassment, as increase scepticism in themselves, while they too often produce it in their admirers." Robert Hall, in this language, refers to only one of several kindred phenomena, which should be taken into account in order to a comprehension of the government of God.

There are five phenomena, or rather classes of phenomena, which must be contemplated by all who would comprehend the state of this world in its relation to God. Two of these are presented, at least more especially, by the providence of God; other two by the human soul, and more particularly by its moral qualities; and an intermediate one by the combined view of both.

I. The providence of God presents us with—	1. Extensive suffering, bodily and mental. 2. Restraints and penalties laid on man.
	3. God at a distance from man.
II. The soul of man in its relation to God shews us—	4. Man at a distance from God. 5. A schism in the human soul.

We are aware that, in bringing these classes of objects under notice, especially at so early a stage of our inquiry, we run the risk of giving our work a repulsive aspect in the eyes of many. It may seem as if we were delineating our God with the grim and sombre visage which settles on the face of many of the heathen idols. Should this impression be unfortunately produced on the minds of any, we trust that it will vanish long before our investigations are brought to a close. If we seem to an age distinguished for the lightness of its literature—this age of literary dissipation, demanding stronger and yet stronger stimulants—to act like the ancient Egyptians when they brought coffins into their feasts, we claim at least to be actuated by the same motives; it is for the purposes of solemn instruction to a generation which needs to be instructed, (though it demands rather to be entertained;) and while we produce the stern memorials of man's weakness, we also proffer the food which, in our view, is fitted to remove it. If we are constrained at some parts of our Treatise to give a prominence to certain darker phenomena, it is because others have left them out of sight; and with our exhibition of the graver and more commanding and authoritative features of the Divine countenance, we shall show a smile of love ever playing upon it, and encouraging the heart of the most timid to approach.

In these sections our object is to state the facts, and point out the unsatisfactory nature of the common explanations, rather than ourselves to offer any positive solution. It is from a combined view of the whole, at a future stage of our inquiries, that the correct conclusion must be derived.

It will not be denied that there is pain, and pain to an extraordinary extent, in the world. It is not the mere circumstance that there is suffering that is so wonderful, but the circumstance that it is so great and widely spread. Why is there pain in the world at all? This is a difficult question to answer; but perhaps not so difficult as this other, Why does it exist to such an extent? Could not God have created a world in which there was no suffering to tear the bodily frame, and no grief to cloud and shadow the soul? Or suppose that we are able to explain this high mystery, and show that there are some incidental advantages to be derived from the existence of pain, the question again presses itself upon us, Why is this suffering so great—so universal? Why do the clouds of disappointment cast shadows so dark and so broad over the prospects of human life? These blackening shadows must surely proceed from some dark and dense body coming between us and the light which shines so brightly and so beautifully from these heavens; and what can that opposing and obstructing obstacle be? Whence the universal liability to disease? Why such wide-spread famine and plague and pestilence? Why is this little infant visited with such grievous and continued agony under the very eye of a mother, whose heart meanwhile is torn as much as is the bodily frame of the beloved child? Come with us, ye sentimental believers in the perfection of man and of this world, to the bedside of this person, tortured continually with excruciating agony, without the possibility of relief being afforded. For many years has he been tossed there as you now see him, and scarcely remembers a single moment's respite being allowed him, or balmy sleep resting on these eyes to drown his suffering in oblivion. We know that ye turn away from the sight, and leave the spot as speedily as possible: but it is good for us to visit the house of mourning, and we fix you here, till we have put some questions, which you may answer better when so situated than when in the house of mirth, and when you look on this world through the gorgeous colouring with which romance and poetry stain every ray that passes through them. Why, then, this protracted suffering? Perhaps you tell us that it is to teach the sufferer purity and patience. Alas! the groans that break from him, the bitterness of every remark that escapes his lips, all shew that these are lessons which he has not learned; and without a special heaven-sent blessing, it is difficult to discover how they should be the natural result of circumstances which seem rather fitted to irritate the spirit into peevishness, to exasperate it into fretfulness, or harden it into sulkiness and rebellion. And when the scene darkens from twilight obscurity into the blackness of night, and the house of disease becomes the house of death, the phantoms thicken and increase. Whence these terrors of death, and the awful gloom which hangs over the sepulchre? Why should it be so appointed that man's earthly existence should ever lead to, and end in a dark cavern, into which all men must enter, but into which the eye of those who remain behind cannot follow them, and from which no one returns to tell what are his state and destiny?

Ingenious speculators, we are aware, have discovered that many advantages follow, in the overruling providence of God, from the existence of certain real or apparent evils. We freely admit that there is force in some of these theories. In respect, in particular, of the death of the lower animals, we allow that there may be advantages in having a succession of generations rather than continuing the existing one, and such a system of course implies the dissolution of the individual. Nay, we may freely admit that there is force in all the theories advanced, so far as they establish the beneficence of God in bringing good out of evil, though we may deny that they explain the existence of the evil. But let us examine some of these speculations. We take up those of Dr. Thomas Brown, because they seem as ingenious and plausible as any that have fallen under our notice.*

"If," says he, "by exposure to the common causes of disease, we were to expose ourselves only to a succession of delightful feelings, how rash would those be who are even at present rash?"

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* See Lect. 93 of Phil. of Human Mind.

When one hears such a solution as this seriously proposed, he is tempted to ask, whether such an end, the preventing of rashness, does really require such an expenditure of painful means; or whether the same end might not have been attained by other means less apparently repugnant to the character of God. But the offered solution starts other and deeper inquiries. Not satisfied with hearing from the Indian that the world rests on a huge animal, we follow him with the inquiry, On what does the animal rest? and not satisfied with hearing that the liability to pain often prevents mankind from exposing themselves to disease, we go on to inquire, why such common causes of disease? —why such rashness on the part of those who are acknowledged to be rash?—why such alarming evils requiring these awful warnings of their approach? Acknowledging, as all must, that there are incidental advantages arising from the existence of suffering in the present dispensation of things, there is the other problem starting into view—Why is there such a constitution of things? Why the need of one evil to counteract another? It is the existence of so many evils that is the grand mystery in this world; and it is not cleared up by showing that one evil is incidentally or intentionally the preventive of another.

But the same ingenious thinker, after stating the various explanatory considerations adduced by Paley, is candid enough to add—"All the advantage, however, which is thus produced by the painful maladies of life, I readily confess, would be too slight to put in the balance with the amount of pain which arises from these maladies." "The true preponderating weight, compared with which every other circumstance seems almost insignificant, * * * is the relation of pain to moral character. It is of advantage to the moral character in two ways, as warning from vice by the penalties attached to vicious conduct, and as giving strength to virtue by the benevolent wishes which it awakes and fosters, and by the very sufferings themselves, which are borne with a feeling of moral approbation."

Now, this solution, while it approaches a little nearer the truth, is still far distant from it. It introduces into the calculation a most important element, which Paley and others have left very much out of account—the consideration of virtue and vice; but it does not allow that element its legitimate weight

Dr. Brown has evidently discovered the unsatisfactory nature of the common explanations: and he has farther observed, that the economy of the world has a reference to the discouragement of vice, and the encouragement of virtue; but while the truth is thus opening upon him, he refuses to follow it. The light of which he has now got a glimpse, might have conducted him to the discovery of that perfection of the Divine character which leads God to withdraw himself from vicious conduct; but, scared by the dazzling brightness of such an attribute, and losing sight of it when it was urging him onwards, he hastens to betake himself to the softer and flowery regions of sentiment and poetry, in which he ever delights to expatiate, and in which he affords rest to himself and his readers after they have followed him in his feats of intellectual agility.

So far as Dr. Brown conceives, that in the infliction of suffering God has a reference to the encouragement of virtue and the discouragement of vice, his views are clear and solid and consistent. He has discovered that there is a greater evil than mere pain, and a greater good than mere pleasure; and that the pain which exists in the world cannot be explained except in its relation to the greater good and the greater evil. Instead of the "greatest happiness" principle, he might have seen what we may call the "greatest morality" principle; and the idea, if prosecuted, would have conducted him to a firm resting-place, on which he might have contemplated the full character of God, and His dealings towards a world which would have been seen by him as fallen. But when the grand reconciling truth was just dawning upon his mind, he turns to another truth which has but sufficient importance to distract his attention. "There will," he says, "be a quicker disposition to feel for others when we ourselves have suffered." Does God, then, create pain that men may feel for it? "The grief of one," he adds, "is the pity of many, and there must be grief if there be pity." Does he mean to say that the grand aim of God in inflicting grief was to cause pity on the part of many? Surely if this had been the whole, or the chief end contemplated by God, it might have been attained at a less expense of pain and sorrow. Besides, it is not to be forgotten, that, if liability to pain and sorrow be a means of strengthening virtue, it is also a means of encouraging vice. Do not all the malignant passions of our nature, such as envy, jealousy, and revenge, derive their main force and motive to action from the circumstance that it is possible to inflict suffering, mental and bodily? Had man been placed in a state of things in which it was not possible for him to produce painful sensations or feelings, the malign affections would not have reigned with such fury as they do in a world so constituted as to admit of their being gratified. It is the very fact that our fellow-men are liable to be injured, which is the prompting occasion of scandal, and of the fearful contests and fiery feuds which cannot be extinguished except in blood. It appears, that if there are incidental advantages arising from the existence of suffering, there are also accompanying disadvantages, and these latter, we fear, through the wickedness of the race, are very considerably the greater. At least every reflecting mind will acknowledge, that, when the elements to be weighed and measured are virtue and vice, it will be difficult to get proper balances, and a true standard of measure;* and difficult, above all things, to say what is the actual residue on the one side or the other, after the proper subtractions have been made.

"If," says the same author, "the inhabitant of some other planet were to witness the kindness and solicitude of a father for his child in his long watchfulness and love, and were then to see the same father force the child, notwithstanding its cries, to swallow some bitter potion, he would surely conclude, not that the father was cruel, but that the child was to derive benefit from the potion which he loathed." This explanation is coming still nearer the truth, but is not pursued to its proper consequences. It proceeds on the idea that pain is a medicine for one who is labouring under disease, and *that* a disease in the very nature of man. What a picture—what a dark picture is thereby given of our world as labouring under a fearful malady! Prosecute the idea, and it will conduct us to truths from which many shrink back when they are close upon them; it will appear that God is conducting his government as toward a world distempered in itself, and in a state displeasing to him. Does not the extent of the remedy, too, prove the extent of the disease, as certainly as the number of prisons in a country demonstrates the extent of the crime? Without at present starting the question, whether the suffering which God inflicts may not be punitive as well as remedial, it appears that the infliction of it proceeds on the principle, that there is a fearful evil of which it is the punishment or the cure. Has this idea been followed out, or rather, has it not been speedily abandoned after it has served a particular purpose? It is at least worthy of being carried out to its proper results, and may conduct us to some very exalted views of the character of God, and some very humbling views of the character of man.

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* The reader will remember the language of Burke—"Weighing, as it were, in scales hung in a shop of horrors so much actual crime against so much contingent advantage, and after putting in and out weights, declaring that the balance was on the side of the advantage."

But leaving these subtilties of Brown, we may remark on the general subject, that the explanations of the kind at present referred to, all proceed on the principle that each man is designed by God, and is bound in himself, to promote the greatest happiness of the race. In regard to this principle, let it be remarked, that it is more than a mere selfish principle—it is a moral principle. There may be nothing moral in the principle which leads each man to promote his own happiness; but when it assumes this special form, that man is *bound* to contemplate the happiness of the race, it becomes a moral principle; and it is by the principle in this its latter form that any intelligent inquirer would propose to explain the existence of suffering. God has so constituted man, that he feels that *he ought* to submit, when needful, to individual suffering, in order to promote the general good; and it may be argued, that the God who implanted such a principle in man's bosom must himself be possessed of this moral quality, and to an infinite degree. It may seem a plausible explanation of human suffering, to urge how expedient it is, that the vice which produces pain should in its turn be visited with pain. But the question recurs, Wherefore is there a state of things in which prevailing vice can so readily produce suffering? It is the liability to suffering which constitutes the mystery, and this difficulty is not removed by showing, that pain may check the means by which pain is produced. Everything, in short, shows that suffering has a reference to vice and virtue fully as much as to the promotion of happiness.

We hold that this conclusion is specially deducible from the existence of *mental suffering.* The plausible explanations of the bodily sufferings of man by "the greatest happiness" principle, do not admit of an application to mental pain under many of its forms, especially when it proceeds from an accusing conscience. Certain mental affections—certain lusts and passions, for instance—lead to the most acute mental distress, naturally and necessarily; and this distress may be held as indicative of God's disapproval of these states. No man can assert, with even the semblance of plausibility, that the misery in such cases is appointed in order to prevent greater misery; for the phenomenon to be explained is the existence of the misery, either under its milder, or under its more appalling forms. It is no explanation of the minor acute distress, which follows the first kindling of evil affections, to point to the fact that these evil affections, if cherished, must issue in greater distress. The very proportioning of the mental pain to the degree of the sin, points the more conclusively and emphatically to the divinely-appointed connexion between them. The Divine indignation against sin in its minor forms rises and swells as the sin increases, and manifests itself in the infliction of ever-deepening misery; and the connexion between the cause and the consequence is indicated by the very fact, that as the one increases, so does the other—that as the rain falls, so do the floods swell. It is not against the misery that God is warning us; but it is against the sin, and by means of the misery. A voice from heaven could scarcely declare more clearly, and certainly could not announce so impressively, that there are certain mental affections which God would brand with the stigma of his severest reprobation.

Enough, at least, has been advanced to show that this universal and divinely-inflicted suffering in body and in mind stands out as a grand mystery, worthy of an attempt being made to explain it; and that the common explanations throw just so much light upon its outskirts as to impress us the more with its vast magnitude and profundity, and with the desirableness of more light being let in to dispel the gloom.

SECT. II.—THE RESTRAINTS AND PENALTIES OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

It might be interesting to know what are the means which God employs in the government of those worlds in which there is no taint of evil. Can we be wrong in concluding that the main instrument, whatever may be the subsidiary ones, is a grand internal principle by which the creature is swayed—being an imperative sense of duty, and the love of God reigning in the soul, and subordinating all things to itself? This we must believe to be the bond, stronger than the gravitation drawing the planets to the sun, which holds the pure intelligences in their spheres, and joins them to the grand centre of all wisdom and life.

But whatever may be the means which God employs in governing other intelligences, it is obvious, even at the first glance, (and farther inquiry deepens the conviction,) that this is not the way in which he rules the world in which we dwell. Man is placed under an economy in which there are numberless restraints and correctives, medicaments and penalties, all originating in the very constitution of the world, falling out in the order of providence, and ready to meet him at every turn—now with their bristling points to stop his career, anon with their whips to punish, and forthwith with their counter-moves to frustrate all his labour, and throw him far back when he seems to be making the most eager progress. Man has liberty of will, (such as all responsible beings must possess,) but he has not liberty of action in every case; and even when he has freedom of action, his actions are not allowed to produce their contemplated results; for, while he proposes, another interposes and disposes, and his schemes are often made to terminate in consequences directly antagonist to those designed by him. "Circumstances," says Niebuhr, in the passage already quoted, "which are called accidental, combine in such a wonderful manner with others to produce certain results, that men evidently cannot do what they please." Man is hemmed in, thwarted, and arrested on all sides. Restrained on either hand, there are instruments lying ready all around for his punishment; and these are often wielded by a hand of fearful and irresistible strength, or set in motion by latent powers possessed of electric velocity.

We discover everywhere in this world traces of design and wisdom; but of design and wisdom, so far as the government of man is concerned, directed to the prevention or punishment of evil. When we go into a well-built and well-regulated school, hospital, or asylum, into a prison or house of correction, we may observe the most beautiful adaptation of part to part, and of each part and all the parts to the whole; and we pronounce the building, its furniture, and the work done in it, to be perfect, but we discover at the same time that they are accommodated to inmates who are not regarded as perfect. We see everywhere vigilance and caution, and instruments provided by suspicion or fear, with means of restraint, of improvement, and of punishment, which would not have been required but for the existence of evil; and we conclude from the very character of the building, and the work which goes on in it, that there is ignorance or poverty, disease or crime, in the dwelling. We may admire the architecture of the fabric, and the mode of conducting the establishment, and we may feel the deepest interest, too, in the inmates; but we observe that the existence of evil is everywhere pre-supposed in the very provision made to cure, to check, and to punish it. Now, looking at this world with an observant eye, we find at all times and in every place a singular apparatus of means, proceeding upon and implying the existence of evil. It does look as if this world, under the government of God, were a school, if we would so use it, for the improvement of the inhabitants—or as if it might be a place of restraint (where "man is a galley-slave, punished, but not amended") in which the prisoner is confined, always with a certain liberty allowed him, till a day of judgment. Without taking into account the existence of human folly and wickedness, our eye will ever fix itself on a machinery, always in motion, but seemingly without a purpose to serve by it—as useless as the furniture of a school-room, of an hospital, or a prison, where there is no ignorance to remove, no disease to remedy, or crime to punish. Why such abrupt terminations to long avenues which lead to nothing?—why such "withered hopes that never come to flower?" why such numberless and ever-acting checks? why such sudden and visible judgments of heaven? why such bridles to curb, such chains to bind, and such walls to confine, if the inhabitants of this world are reckoned pure and spotless by him who rules them?

An intelligent visitant, let us suppose, from a remote island of the ocean, or a distant planet of our system, has alighted on the isle of St. Helena, at the time when Napoleon Bonaparte was confined in it. Totally unacquainted with the previous history of that wonderful man, he has to gather all his information from personal observation and inference. Himself unnoticed, he walks about and surveys the strange circumstances which present themselves to his view. His attention is soon fixed on an individual, discovered by him to be the principal personage on the island, and he observes that all the arrangements made by others have a relation, more or less directly, to him. He would seem to be the monarch of the whole territory, and yet it is evident that he is confined and suspected on every hand. He has a certain degree of liberty allowed, and he is ever asserting it and seeking its extension, while he is jealous in the extreme of the supposed attempts to deprive him of it, and complaining loudly of the restraints laid upon him. It is observed, that the persons by whom he is surrounded pay him all respect and deference; while they are at the very time watching and guarding him, and ready, if he go beyond prescribed limits, to resort to bolder measures. This personage, it is farther observed, has in his manner an air of dignity which impresses the spectator with awe, while he has also an air of restlessness and discontent which moves him to pity. What reasonable conclusion can the traveller draw from this strange combination and jumble of seeming contradictions? He knows not, for a time, what to think. There are times when he is confident that this individual, on whom all eyes are fixed, is a king; but then he sees him watched and suspected as if he was a felon. He concludes that he may be a bondsman or a prisoner; but this conclusion is confounded when he reflects that a certain freedom is permitted him, that great honour is paid him, and that there are traces of greatness and power in his manner and character. It is possible that the traveller, after perplexing himself for a time, may give up all idea of resolving the mystery. Perhaps it may not occur to him that the opposite and seemingly inconsistent phenomena which present themselves may be combined in a consistent result, or, as the German metaphysicians would say, in a higher unity; but should the idea occur, and he prosecute it sufficiently far, it will at once conduct him to a solution of all his difficulties, and the truth will now open to him, and show him in this personage a fallen monarch, with remains of former grandeur, confined here for a time, and with only a certain degree of freedom and authority allowed him. The idea may not at once suggest itself to the mind of the traveller; but should it occur to him, or be brought under his notice, it will at once recommend itself to his reason. In particular, should he now meet with some individual who relates the previous history of Napoleon, dwelling specially on his greatness and degradation, he is prepared to credit his informant, and he feels now that the mystery has been unfolded, and that all difficulties have vanished.

No illustration should be carried beyond the purpose contemplated; and that now used is merely intended to exhibit the kind of plaited chain which observation and reasoning joining together will be inclined to construct out of the complex materials before us, when we look at the relation in which man stands to the world. We cannot avoid discovering proofs of man's grandeur and dignity. All nature, inanimate, instinctive, and sentient, recognises him as its superior and its lord, and ministers to his comfort. Provision is made for his numerous wants, by a complicated but most skilfully arranged machinery. Then what noble mental faculties! what deep speculations! what rich emotions! what far-reaching projects and anticipations! There are persons who look to man exclusively under these fairer aspects, and never cease to discourse of his greatness and goodness. But other circumstances force themselves on the attention of those who keep their mind open for the reception of the whole truth. All things sublunary have a reference more or less direct to man; but many of the divine arrangements are fitted to leave the impression, that God cannot trust mankind in respect of their wisdom, their goodness, or integrity of purpose. We may observe ever-watchful sentinels guarding him; and we learn that force is ever ready to be employed if certain limits are passed, and certain stringent regulations transgressed. We discover everywhere signs of littleness and restlessness, of meanness and of crime. There are divines who fix their eyes exclusively upon the features of humanity last named, and conclude that man is now lower than the beasts that perish. While partial and prejudiced minds would confine their attention to one or other of these views, the enlarged soul would contemplate both, and go out in search of some doctrine comprehensive enough to embrace all. Apart from positive information as to the history of the world, from tradition or professed revelation, he may find himself baffled in all his conjectures; but should the idea be presented to him of original perfection and a subsequent fall, he feels now as if he had obtained what he wanted—a truth which gives consistency and coherence to every other truth. But of this more hereafter.

SECT. III.—THE DISTANCE OF GOD FROM MAN.

Assuming that God is a being of infinite wisdom and love, it does seem mysterious that he should not have devised means by which his intelligent creatures on the earth may enter into communion with him. A very little observation suffices to discover the wonderful pains which have been taken with man, in creating him at first, in endowing him with bodily organs and mental faculties, in opening to him sources of knowledge, and placing copious resources at his command. What high intelligence! What far-sighted sagacity! What fields, rich and fertile, placed around him, inviting him to enter that he may dig for treasures and gather fruits! It does seem strange, that in endowing man with such lofty powers, God should not have furnished him with faculties to communicate directly with his Maker and Governor. God has connected soul and body closely and intimately, so that the one can correspond with the other; but by neither can man correspond with the Author of his existence. He has given senses by which to communicate with the world around; but He has given no bodily or mental organ by which to hold communion with Himself. He has enabled us to hold pleasant and profitable intercourse with our fellow-creatures; but through no natural channel can we enjoy direct society with God. It looks, meanwhile, as if it was intended that man should enjoy such communion; and when we reflect, first upon his capacity, and then upon what he has actually attained, we feel in much the same way as when we survey the eyeballs of the blind, and then learn that they cannot see. It is a mystery requiring to be unravelled, that God should throw open in such ungrudging munificence the works of nature, that man may expatiate in them at pleasure; and yet that he should have kept himself at such an awful and unapproachable distance, and shut himself as if studiously from our view. The telescope which he has enabled man to form, looks into distances of space which cannot be calculated, and the discoveries of geology look into ages which cannot be numbered; but whether we look above, or behind, or before, we cannot anywhere within this wide expanse which we have explored, reach immediate intercourse with the Being of whom we yet know that he dwells somewhere, or rather everywhere within it. In contact everywhere with the creature, man is in felt contact nowhere with the Creator; though it might seem as if the immediate contemplation of God and fellowship with him was an infinitely higher and more profitable exercise, could he only reach it, than any intercourse which he can have with the workmanship of his hands.

Why does God thus keep at such a distance from creatures otherwise so highly favoured? If man's soul, like his body, be mortal, how strange that a spirit so noble in itself, and so richly endowed, should be annihilated without once coming in contact with the great Spirit of the universe! If man's soul be immortal, as the great and good in all ages have believed, why does not God deign to instruct him in his future and eternal destiny?

God, it is true, is known by us to be very near, and yet we feel him to be at an infinite distance. He seems as if approaching us, and yet he is unapproachable. Men call upon him, and feel as if they were invited to call upon him, and yet he deigns no answer. There is the prayer of the inquirer for light, the complaint of the sufferer, and the cry of doubt and despair, and yet these heavens continue shut and silent. "Even to-day is my complaint bitter, my stroke is heavier than my groaning. Oh that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat!" Such have been the complaint and the demand of many, who have been constrained, when no answer is given, to add, "Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him." The deepest thinkers have been in deeps in which they saw no light. "The whole hemisphere of contemplation," says Foster, "appears inexpressibly strange and mysterious. It is cloud pursuing cloud, forest after forest, and alps upon alps." The wild infidel (we mean Rousseau) proposes a test by which he may determine whether he is or is not in a state of salvation. He is to throw a stone at a particular tree—if it strike the tree, he reckons himself safe; and if it do not strike the tree, he draws the other conclusion. He performs the act, and God takes no notice of it, but stands apart in solemn majesty, as if he could not condescend to give light to the inquirer. The frenzied poet (Shelley) writes Atheist after his name, among the grandest of the works of God ; yet the rocks do not rend, the mountains do not quake, and the lakes sleep on as calmly in their rocky bosoms, and the streams leap with as lively and prattling a play as if they rejoiced in all that was done. Man wanders in the mazes of error, and God does not interfere to set him right, though he sometimes seems to interpose in order to punish. Errors descend from generation to generation, through regions wide as India, and thickly peopled as China, and the stream is allowed to flow on. The sorrowful complain of this silence as cruel. The doubting feel as if it was unreasonable. The sceptic lays his fabric on these doubts and difficulties as on a foundation of ruins. Meanwhile God's works move on as if he was unconscious of all this, or as if nature knew no higher power than blind caprice or self-developing law.

There are persons who, on observing this silence and apparent separation of God from mankind, conclude that God has ceased to take any interest in the world. The ancient Epicureans and Sadducees, and the Epicureans and Sadducees of every age, have elevated God to an ethereal region, where he cannot be disturbed by the noise and folly, by the cries and complaints of his creatures. But facts belonging to a different order force themselves upon our notice. While God stands apparently at so unapproachable a distance, there are yet intimations of his being very near and ever watchful. Man sometimes wishes that God would let him alone. He complains of the strict and jealous care which God takes of him. " Let me alone, for my days are vanity. What is man that thou shouldest magnify him, and that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him, and that thou shouldest visit him every morning, and try him every moment ? How long wilt thou not depart from me ?" But God shows that he will not let man alone. God has within every human breast a witness for himself, giving admonition of guilt, and pointing to coming punishment. He has various ways of indicating that he has never, for one instant, been unobservant of the conduct of his creatures. Nemesis has always been represented as seeming to tarry, but making her appearance most opportunely at last. When man's passion is strong, and bent upon indulgence, avenging justice may seem as if it was standing aside, and inattentive; but it is only that it may seize him with a more powerful grasp in the state of exhaustion that follows. When the plots of cunning and deceit are successful, it may look as if God did not observe human affairs; but when the dishonest man is caught at last, he finds it to be in toils which have for years been weaving for him. Napoleon, on his march to Moscow, concluded that he could command his destiny; but when the nations of Europe, alarmed at his ambition, shut him up in St. Helena, every one saw that his destiny had, instead, been all the time carrying him along, as the stream bears upon its surface the bubbles which its waters had formed. It not unfrequently happens that every opposing power, which the wicked thinks he has crushed, rises up to pursue and punish him, when the tide of fortune is turning against him. Every drop of that cup of bitter elements which he has been filling for others, he must drink himself when he has filled up the measure of his iniquities. The fagots which he has been collecting for the destruction of others all go to augment the flame of his own funeral pile. The drunkard is not more certainly haunted by the frightful apparitions called up by the disease which follows excess, than crime is pursued by its avenging spirits. There is, if we may so speak, a gathering and closing in at the death, and that to behold his agonies and humiliation, of all the powers which have been in scattered scent and pursuit of him, throughout the whole hunting-ground of his career. It is affirmed of the drowning man, that in the brief space of time that precedes unconsciousness, every event of his past life passes in rapid review before his eyes; and there is certainly something of this hurrying in the avenging events, all having a connexion with his past life, which God crowds on one another to make the ambitious, the proud, and malignant, discover that He has all along been ruling their destiny.

Now, combine these two classes of facts, the apparent distance of God, and yet his nearness intimated in various ways, his seeming unconcern and yet constant watchfulness; and we see only one consistent conclusion which can be evolved, that God regards man as a criminal, from whom he must withdraw himself, but whom he must not allow to escape.

An individual, we may suppose, has committed a horrible crime, when intoxicated, and is committed to prison while yet in a state of unconsciousness. On awaking to reflection, he would make inquiry as to his past or present state; but he finds that there is none to answer him. He utters a cry of alarm or agony, but no reply is given. He would conclude that he is abandoned by all; but, on turning round and round, he finds prison walls, with only so much of the light of heaven shining through as to show that pains have been taken to render his escape hopeless. What other conclusion can he draw than that he is shut up in prison, awaiting the time when he is to be brought out to trial? Does it not seem as if man was in a somewhat similar position, abandoned and yet watched, spared in life, but spared as if for trial? And it were well if, instead of seeking to drown misery by frantic merriment, or to beat uselessly against his prison walls, he was endeavouring to realize the nature and extent of that crime of which he is but half-conscious, and anxiously inquiring if there be not some way of averting the judgment which may soon be pronounced against him.

SECT. IV.—THE DISTANCE OF MAN FROM GOD.

The facts which present themselves under this head are the counterpart of those considered by us under the last. There is both an attracting and repelling principle.

First, there is a feeling in man prompting him to seek God, if haply he may find him. Transient feelings of gratitude, the fear of danger, the keen sense of sin, the fear of punishment—all these would draw or drive him into the presence of God. There are certain times in the lives of all whose hearts are not completely hardened, when their feelings flow forth spontaneously towards the God or the gods whom they have been taught to worship. When some lovely landscape kindles the eye and expands the breast, and calls forth trains of thought which run towards all that is beautiful and grand, there are yet deeper feelings which will prompt them to raise their anthem of praise with that which ascends from the works of God around. When unexpected blessings are conferred, when a friend long absent suddenly returns, when a relative who has struggled for a time with the billows of death is restored to the bosom of his rejoicing family, when some stroke of adversity is stayed at the moment of descent, when the storm which threatened to overwhelm us is suddenly calmed,—it is the native impulse of the human mind to pour forth its sentiments, too spiritual for human language to utter them, or human ear to understand them, into the ear of a listening God, to whom they are due, and who can comprehend them all. More frequently—such is the nature of the human mind—it is when the storms rise, or when wearied of the voyage, or when rest might be pleasant after labour, that the mind pictures a tranquil haven to which it would betake itself in the presence of God. Or it is when clouds are gathering round, when gaunt poverty is in hard pursuit, when friends die or forsake us, when the last star of hope in the firmament is quenched in darkness—we are brought to our knees by the weight of our cares, and find no outlet to our feelings so suitable as the language of devotion and prayer. More powerful still, if not more frequent, it is a sense of sin and a fear of deserved punishment; it is the first moment's reflection after passion has hurried us into the commission of some criminal deed which cannot be undone; it is the resurrection of some sin buried in oblivion, but now rising to haunt us like the ghost of a departed foe; it is the vivid flash of lightning, such as the conscience sometimes emits, giving us a view of overhanging darkness and clouds charged with judgments. These are the feelings which constrain men to cry out to God, and which prompt them to express their faith or confess their fears.

Such is the attracting principle—and we do not wonder that there should be a principle attracting man to his Maker; but there is also a repelling principle, and it is the latter which is so very mysterious. It is a fact—and the explanation is to be found in an evil conscience—that there is something in human nature which would drive man away from his Maker. When his better feelings would prompt him to fall down before God, a hand from behind is felt to be holding him back, and he hesitates and procrastinates till the time for action is over. Thus, when nature is displaying its loveliest scenes, he would be inclined to look to that light in the heavens whose beams gladden them all; but the eye is blinded by its excess of purity, and turns back instantly to the less dazzling landscapes of the earth. In the hour of adversity, the desponding feelings which, for the health of the soul, should be allowed to flow out towards God, are repressed and bound up from all inspection, and they fester within till they pollute the heart and rankle the temper, and burst out in misery and crime. Still more frequently, in order to check his melancholy, and rouse his morbid feelings, the man runs round the gay and giddy circles of society, and tries to banish grief by banishing reflection, till he falls in the very feverishness and dizziness of a feeling which has been too highly excited. More melancholy still, he takes the cup of intoxication into his hands, and seeks to drown his cares in forgetfulness; or he goes to the dark haunts of vice, and hatches passions within him, the bursting whereof produces a viper spreading everywhere poison and death. Again, when the conviction of sin would lay him in lowly penitence before the God whom he has offended, he betakes himself to certain outward acts and services, which may stretch the strings of his feelings till the vibrations of conscience subside. When he has fallen into vice, and when a sense of weakness and insufficiency would drive him for help to the power of the Almighty, he is tempted by pride to collect his remaining strength, and make one other effort to save his sinking virtue; and though the vessel, when yet entire, could not bear him up, but was broken in pieces by the dashing of the waves of temptation and passion, he will cling to some feeble fragment of it, and soon feels himself sinking to rise no more.

Such experiences demonstrate that there is alienation from God on the part of man. The nature and extent of this alienation may be more fitly investigated at a future stage of our inquiries; but the fact that there is such an estrangement proceeding from a consciousness of sin, cannot be disputed, for history and experience furnish too abundant proof of its existence. Every one feels it to be natural for him to love certain earthly objects, but that, while it is natural to the father to love his child, it is not natural to man to love God as he ought to love him. Man is thus driven from God by one principle, while there is something within which at the very time is testifying in behalf of God. "Man," says Vinet, "cannot renounce either his sins or his God." There is, in short, a conscience, but a conscience unpacified, a conscience telling him of God, but urging him to flee from that very God to whom it directs him.

Hence the strange contradictions of the human soul. It is drawn to God, and yet it is repelled from God when it comes near him—as the electrified ball is repelled as soon as it comes into contact with the object which attracted it. Man is constrained to acknowledge God, and constrained to tremble before the God whom he acknowledges. He would escape from God only to feel that he is chained to him by bonds which he cannot break. He would flee from God, but feels himself helpless as the charmed bird with the eye of the serpent fixed upon it. He would go forth like Cain from the presence of the Lord, but he has God's mark upon him, and is still under his eye in all his wanderings. He would flee from the presence of God, like the rebellious prophet, into a region of thought and feeling where the remembrance of God can never trouble him; but it is only to find himself brought back by restraints laid upon him. In his conduct towards his God, there is prostration and yet rebellion; there is assurance and yet there is terror. When he refuses to worship God, it is from mingled pride and alarm; when he worships God, it is from the same feelings; and the worship which he spontaneously pays is a strange mixture of presumption and slavish fear.

Hence the vibrating movements of the world's religious history. Under this double influence, attractive and repulsive, man's eccentric orbit is not so much like that of the planets, with their equable motion and temperature, as like that of the comets, now approaching, as it were, within the scorching beams of the Central Heat and Light, and again driven away into the utmost and coldest regions of space, and seeming as if they were let loose from all central and restraining influence.

Under these influences, sometimes clashing, and at other times concurring, man acts in one or other of two ways; and we urge the circumstance as at once a proof and illustration of the truth of the views now advanced. He concludes that God is taking no notice of him, and he follows the bent of his own inclinations; or, in the dread of punishment, he betakes himself to superstition and idle ceremonies, to excruciating sacrifices and acts of will-worship, supposed by him to be fitted to pacify an angry God. Some give themselves up to the one, and some to the other, of these impulses; some are Sadducees, and others are Pharisees; some are Epicureans, and others are Stoics; some are Infidels, and others are Devotees. The majority of mankind flit between the two, between unbelief and superstition; now, when in health, giving themselves to the wildness of the one, and now in trouble, clinging to the strictness of the other, and generally remaining in a kind of neutral territory, like the false prophet's coffin, seeming to hang by the heavens, but truly upon the earth.* Mme. De Sevigné expresses, with her usual *naïveté*, the feelings of multitudes:—"I wish very much I could be religious. I plague La Mousse about it every day. I belong at present neither to God nor the devil; and I find this condition very uncomfortable, though between you and me the most natural in the world."

Illustrative Note (a.)—THE RELIGIOUS HISTORY OF MANKIND.

Our ordinary philosophic historians have utterly failed in their attempts to explain the world's history so far as it relates to religion or superstition, because they have not taken into account those principles in man's nature which now draw him towards a supernatural power, and again drive him away from it. Such writers as Montesquieu and Robertson have seen other causes, physical or moral, but have left this one very much out of view. The clever but flippant Voltaire exhibited the repulsive or infidel principle in his writings, as he is said to have professed the attractive or superstitious influence at his dying hour; but it was not to be expected of him that he should be able to detect and develop those principles of which he was the unconscious slave. Some of our later historical speculators, such as Guizot and Carlyle, have had occasional glimpses of the better principle, but none of them have sounded the full depths of the "spirit's mysteries," or taken sufficiently enlarged views of both principles, the better and the worse, to enable them to explain satisfactorily the most startling passages in the world's history. They have no calculus to solve so high a problem. Such writers as Hume and Gibbon, feeling all commonplace explanations to fail, can only talk of man's unaccountable madness in everything relating to religion.

These two, the attracting and repelling principle, do not, as might be supposed, nullify or destroy each other, but produce motion and powerful action like the attractions and repulsions of electricity. According as the one or other prevails, according as there is excess or defect, there is motion towards God, or motion away from God—there is belief, or there is scepticism. Some of the most extraordinary events in the history of individuals, of families, and of nations, are to be explained by these agencies. They have been the real moving power in the production of events in which ordinary observers have discovered other and more obvious and superficial causes, just as electricity is now acknowledged to be the cause of changes in physical phenomena, which were before referred to more palpable agents, such as heat and light. The sudden changes in men's religious opinions, and the religious movements which form so curious and melancholy a chapter in the world's history, can be understood only by the help of these deeper principles, just as the changes in the weather, the currents of the atmosphere, and the gathering and scattering of the clouds, can be explained only by the attractions and repulsions of polar forces. These deeper principles of our nature are capable of producing results of the most appalling magnitude. The winds of feeling, the waves of passion, and the fires of lust, the old and recognised elements, do not produce greater effects upon each other, and upon the more earthly ingredients in man's nature, than does the more latent principle that derives its force from the repelling and attractive power of conscience. No human arithmetic can estimate the velocity with which this current, positive or negative, will rush in to fill the vacuum which may have been produced in the heart of an individual man, when the worldly hopes which filled it have been torn away, or in the heart of a nation when it is without a creed, or when its creed has become obsolete, and is felt to be indefensible. The lurid lightning does not produce a more rapid effect in the physical world, nor does the accompanying thunder raise a deeper feeling of awe, than the religious impulse has done at some periods, and the hatred of religion has done at other periods in the history of the world.

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* Hume speaks (Nat. Hist. of Religion, Sect. 12) of man's usual religious state as some "*unaccountable* operation of the mind between disbelief and conviction." We have endeavoured to give an explanation of this state by principles which Hume was not willing to look at.

It is thus that we are to account for the powerful impulse which religion, or the hatred of religion, has given to the minds of individual men and of nations. Hence the frenzy—hence the bigotry of infidelity. Hence, too, the frenzy—hence the bigotry of superstition. Hence we find men now mad upon their idols, and now mad against them—now honouring, and forthwith beating them. The ancient Egyptians, in times of severe national distress, took their sacred animals to a secret place and put them to death; and threatened their gods, that, if the calamity did not pass away, they would disclose the mysteries of Isis, or expose the members of Osiris to Typhon. Augustus revenged himself for the loss of his fleet by storms on two several occasions, by forbidding the statue of Neptune to be carried in the procession of the gods. "These men fear the gods," says Plutarch, "and fly to them for succour. They flatter them, and insult them. They pray to them, and complain of them." These impulses have at times been stronger than the strongest of human instincts and affections, than the love of parents for their children, or the love of life. Mothers have made their children to pass through the fire; and devotees have mangled their own bodies, or thrown themselves before the car of Juggernaut. The results that have followed from the abuse of this sentiment have been as stupendous and melancholy as any that have proceeded from the bursting out of the human passions. One hundred and thirty-six thousand human skulls were counted in a particular temple in Mexico; and it is calculated, that for a period of 200 years, there had been an average of 680 murders in honour of a single idol.* Other events show, that enmity to God has produced consequences no less lamentable. The history of the Jews, at the fall of Jerusalem, does not more strikingly illustrate the strength of the one principle, than the counterpart history of Paris, at the time of the first Revolution, demonstrates the force of the other principle, when men, as Burke says, "hate God with all their heart, with all their mind, with all their soul, and with all their strength." The whole passage is worthy of being quoted, as descriptive of the strength of a principle, of the nature of which, however, Burke had nothing but imperfect glimpses. "The rebels to God perfectly abhor the author of their being; they hate him with all their mind, with all their soul, and with all their strength. He never presents himself to their thoughts, but to menace and alarm them. They cannot strike the sun out of the heavens, but they are able to raise a smouldering smoke that obscures him from their own eyes. Not being able to revenge themselves on God, they have a delight in vicariously defacing, degrading, torturing, and tearing to pieces his image in man. Let no one judge of them by what he has conceived of them, when they were not incorporated and had no lead. They were then only passengers in a common vehicle. They were then carried along with the general motion of religion in the community; and, without being aware of it, partook of its influence. In that relation, at worst, their nature was left free to counterwork their principles. [Burke should have said, one part of their nature restrained another.] They despaired of giving any very general currency to, their opinions. They considered them a reserved privilege for the chosen few. But when the possibility of dominion, lead, and propagation, presented themselves, and they saw that the ambition which before made them hypocrites might rather gain than lose by a daring avowal of their sentiments, then the nature of this infernal spirit, which has evil for its good, appeared in its full perfection. Nothing, indeed, but the possession of some power can, with any certainty, discover what at the bottom is the true character of any man." *

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* Prescott's Conquest of Mexico, B. i. c. iii.

Such phenomena as these, whether connected with superstition or infidelity, have baffled all ordinary historical philosophers, or philosophic historians, to account for them. After we have read all that they can say about human madness and human passion—about pride, vanity, and malice—we feel as if they had merely explained some of the accompaniments of these great movements, and shown why the stream took a particular direction, but without at all exploring the stream itself, which leaps up from one of the profoundest depths of the human heart, and needs from the other powers and propensities only a channel to flow in.

The more popular of the false religions which have spread themselves over the world—the superstitions of the East, of ancient Greece and Rome, of Mohammed, and of the corrupt Christian Church—have all given the most ample scope to these impulses in our nature, and to some of the worst passions in the human heart besides. What a strange compound, yet banded firmly together, of licentiousness and yet of rigidity, of loose morality and of unbending ritual! No system of superstition will be extensively adopted unless it provides for these opposing wants of our nature, unless it give open or secret license to wildness, and allow room or find employment for remorse. The two peculiar features of man's existing condition are evil passions and an evil conscience. No superstition can become popular which does not provide or admit something to meet the craving demands of both. Hence the grossness of Paganism, with its horrid and cruel sacrifices: hence the licentiousness and the tortures practised around the same Indian temple. Bacchus and Venus are to be found in the same mythologies with Baal and Pluto, and under various names, and with minor individual differences, have been worshipped over the larger portion of the Pagan world. Even in Rome, which professed an abhorrence of the levity of the Greeks, there were, according to Valerius Maximus, so many as 7000 bacchanals, among whose mysteries both prostitution and murder occupied an important place. Hence the love of war, with the stringent formularies that distinguished Mohammedanism in the days of its youth and vigour. The apostate Christian Church seems to unite in itself all the elements found separately in every other superstition, and to be Catholic and all-embracing, not in its truths, but in its errors. We agree with De Maistre in thinking that "there is not a dogma in the Catholic Church, nor even a general custom belonging to the high discipline, which has not its roots in the extreme depths of human nature, and consequently in some general opinion more or less altered here and there, but common in its principles to all nations."† In the bosom of that Church there have been embraced at the same instant unbridled scepticism and profligacy, grasping ambition and the most profound deceit, with the asceticism of the anchorite, and the blind faith of the devotee. These things may seem inconsistent, and so they are; but

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* Burke's Regicide Peace.

† Du Pape.

their inconsistency is to be found in human nature, the character of which they exhibit, as the unwholesome food which the diseased stomach demands points out the nature and craving power of the malady with which it is afflicted.

When a religion waxes old in a country—when the circumstances which at first favoured its formation or introduction have changed—when in an age of reason it is tried and found unreasonable—when in an age of learning it is discovered to be the product of the grossest ignorance—when in an age of levity it is felt to be too stern,—then the infidel spirit takes courage, and with a zeal in which there is a strange mixture of scowling revenge and light-hearted wantonness, of deep-set hatred and laughing levity, it proceeds to level all existing temples and altars, and erects no others in their room. "The popular religions of antiquity," says Neander, "answered only for a certain stage of culture. When the nations in the course of their progress had passed beyond this, the necessary consequence was a dissevering of the spirit from the religious traditions. In the case of the more quiet and equable development of the Oriental mind, so tenacious of the old, the opposition between the mythic religion of the people and the secret theosophic doctrines of a priestly caste, who gave direction to the popular conscience, might exist for centuries without change. But among the more excitable nations of the West, intellectual culture, so soon as it attained to a certain degree of independence, must fall into collision with the mythic religion handed down from the infancy of the people." "As early as the fifth and fourth centuries before Christ, the arbitrary and heartless dialectic of the sophists was directed against the might of holy tradition and morals."* Celsus may be taken as the representative of the infidel principle when Christianity was introduced. Possessed of "wit and acuteness, without earnest purpose or depth of research, and with a worldly understanding that glances merely at the surface, and delights in hunting up difficulties and contradictions," he opposes superstition, not because of his love for religion, but because of his hatred to all religion; and hence is found opposing both superstition and the true religion, with only this difference, that while he laughs at the popular mythologies, he gets angry at Christianity.

When Popery was waning in France, in the days of Louis XIV., when the lives of the clergy brought reproach on religion, and its superstitions could not stand the sifting light of modern science—then infidelity, long lurking, as it ever lurks, in the midst of superstition, found vent in those sneers which are always the appropriate and true expression of scepticism, expressive at once of its wantonness and deep malignity. In the present day, the superstitions of India, in which theology and cosmogony are so closely intertwined that they must stand or fall together, are being undermined among the higher classes by the advancement of European science. One look through the telescope dispels all the illusions of the Brahminical faith, and blots out of existence as many myriads of gods as it brings into view myriads of stars reflecting the glory of the one living and true God. The result is a widening scepticism among the Hindoos of the higher castes.

But no nation can be long without a religion. There are times in every man's history when he feels that he needs to be strengthened by faith in a higher power; and mankind generally will never consent systematically to cut the last tie that connects them with heaven. The attracting principle *must* operate; and being a universally active and powerful principle, it insists on a creed and religious worship as its appropriate expression.

Human sagacity cannot predict what building may be raised on the ruins of ancient superstitions, among the half-civilized nations of the East; but it can certainly foretell, proceeding on the known principles of the human mind, that when infidelity has advanced a little farther with its work of devastation, nature, which abhors a vacuum, will demand something positive to fill up the void. If scriptural truth does not pre-occupy the ground, it may be feared that the superstition which grew so vigorously on the debris of fallen empires in the middle ages of Europe, and which has been transplanted into the rich but wild soil of South America, and of not a few of the British colonies, may yet find its seeds taking congenial root in the heaving plains on which the superstitions of India and China are soon to decay.

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* General Church History—Introduction.

We know what has taken place in France. The infidel principle wrought its appropriate work of destruction at the first Revolution. The opposite principle then rushed in once more to fill up the void. Napoleon Bonaparte perceived that a new and vigorous crop must spring up from the old and indestructible principles which have their roots deep down in the human heart; and that the lean and haggard ears which infidelity had raised up were becoming thinner and weaker, and must needs die. He reasoned from what he had experienced in his own breast more than from observation, and his reasoning had therefore the firmer foundation to rest on. M. Thiers, in whom the conqueror has found a befitting historian—the one being as clever and as unprincipled, too, as the other—has furnished us with a deeply interesting description of this singular passage in his history. "For my part," said Bonaparte, when at Malmaison, "I never hear the sound of the church-bell in the neighbouring village without emotion." The proposal to restore the Catholic religion was listened to with scorn by those *savans* of Paris, who had all their days been inveterately opposed to religion. They scowled upon and ridiculed the proposal; declared it was weakness in him to submit to superstition which had for ever passed away; that he needed no such aid to government, and that he might do what he pleased. "Yes," says he, "but only with regard to the real and sensibly felt wants of France." The real and sensibly felt wants which he felt himself, and which the nation felt, were the craving for religious belief and worship suitable to their particular desires, and fitted to meet and gratify them. The events which followed the resolution taken by Bonaparte—the negotiations with the Pope, and the setting up of the Romish worship, and the general enthusiasm of the nation—all show how deeply planted, and how strong is the religious affection in the human heart. "Whether true or false, sublime or ridiculous," is the reflection of the historian, "man must have a religion. Everywhere, in all ages, in all countries, in ancient as in modern times, in civilized as well as in barbarian nations, we find him a worshipper at some altar, be it venerable, degraded, or blood-stained." *

Infidelity, like religion, has existed in all countries, and originates in that deep impulse which drives man away from God. But it cannot be the prevailing state of mind in a nation for any length of time. The reason is obvious. Both of the principles to which we have referred as existing in the mind must operate. Neither can be destroyed, and both are in their nature active. But the infidel principle can exist and flourish in the very midst of reigning superstition. It derives its strongest nourishment from the rank and foul superstition fermenting around it. It points to the folly of the ignorant or deluded devotee with a sneer, and congratulates itself on its own superiority. Except when dreadfully rankled and reproached, it is not disposed to make any sacrifices for its principles, or rather want of principle. Harassed by internal fears, it is at heart cowardly, even when it must seem courageous. Coleridge says of blasphemy, that "he uttered big words, and yet ever and anon I observed that he turned pale at his own courage." Except at those times when, as Burke says, it longs for domination, it can be quiet, and timid, and time-serving, and securely cloak itself under the old distinction of esoteric doctrine for the knowing few, and exoteric doctrine for the vulgar.

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* Thiers, Consulate and Empire.

But the religious or superstitious principle cannot willingly allow its opposite to reign or prevail. A negation can exist anywhere; it is slippery, easy, and accommodating; but that which is positive must have space and room, and it would drive out that which resists it. Hence the religious principle, as being the active, the undaunted, the unaccommodating, (or if you will) the intolerant principle, must, in ordinary circumstances, be the predominant one.

Infidelity soon learns that it is its easiest policy, not openly to withstand the popular religion and so raise its enthusiasm, but rather quietly to insinuate itself like a liquid through certain appropriate veins and channels of the body corporate, till it has soaked the whole in its own coldness and dampness. Hence religion is bold, uncompromising, and resolute, either reigning or seeking to reign; while infidelity, as seen, for instance, in Hume and Gibbon, the Neological critics of Germany, and the modern school of Pantheists, is cowering and cunning; dealing much in innuendo and insinuation ; generally walking with soft and stealthy steps, satisfied with freedom from restraint, and quiet indulgences ; and fearing nothing so much as an earnest and pure religion disturbing its complacency, and making it doubt of its own doubts. The historians referred to can tolerate the grossest superstition; the one can excuse Popery, and the other apologize for the most licentious Paganism; and their wrath is stirred up, only when a pure religion is exhibited in the lives of the Puritans of the 17th century, or of the primitive Christians.

It cannot be doubted, we think, that the prevalence of infidelity in France was promoted and hastened by the warm sentimentalism of Rousseau, more than even by the acute exposures and ridicule of Voltaire. In the writings of the latter, infidelity is exhibited too much in its leanness and nakedness to offer any attractions to the heart. The sceptical principle, no doubt, is gratified, and gloats over his pages; but the opposite principle rebels, and swells up in a regurgitation of feeling. On the other hand, the religious principle is deceived, at least for a time, by the gorgeous drapery of sentiment, underneath which Rousseau hides the hideous skeleton of infidelity. His sentimental faith and doctrinal scepticism served for a time to satisfy the deeper cravings of the human heart. But the mask, a thin one after all, was soon stripped off. If Voltaire set the conscience against the intellect, Rousseau's writings set the intellect against the heart; and the contest was painful to those who did not wish to be disturbed by an internal schism. The struggle was, as it were, embodied and acted in the unseemly contest between Hume and Rousseau. The mind of France, torn for a time, soon demanded something more consistent; and this it found in the *Génie du Christianisme;* and the nation, converted to infidelity by Rousseau, was reconverted to superstition by Chateaubriand. The writings of the latter have many of the same elements of power as the former, and both address the two opposing feelings of man's religious nature. There are passages of Chateaubriand, and more particularly of his *quondam* disciple Lamartine, which show, that amidst superabounding faith of sentiment, there is a great deficiency of faith in truth; that, while there is sufficient glowing enthusiasm to satisfy the cravings of natural religion, there is yet enough of latitude of doctrine to allow of the free working of pride and self-righteousness-

Pantheism is the form in which infidelity prevails on the Continent of Europe in the present day; and by its illusions, it satisfies many of those appetencies of the mind which would shrink from gaunt and grim Atheism. It pictures a fantasy with which the imagination may hold communion, but not of such a holy brightness as to drive back the spirit with an oppressive sense of demerit. Indeed, sin can be regarded as no barrier in the way of intercourse with the divinity of this system, for evil is just one of his own developments. Ample and accommodating, it professes to embrace within it all religions, and actually embraces all dead religions; and, like the ancient Roman superstition of the days of the emperors, it is tolerant of all religions, always excepting a living and uncompromising scriptural religion which refuses to enter into alliance with it; just as the emperors erected temples to the grim divinities of Egypt and of the other nations that they conquered, and yet virulently persecuted the Christians. Its fantasies may delude for a time the minds of the rich, the idle, and the refined; but meanwhile there will be a feeling of emptiness and want in the depths of their bosoms; and the great mass of practical men will scorn the delusion which would be practised upon them, and rush to a real infidelity or a real superstition, recollecting only one lesson learned in the school of Pantheism, and that is a fatal habit of excusing moral evil as a step towards good, or as a necessary part of a beneficent development.

Looking to the present state of the Continent of Europe, it might seem as if infidelity, under its various forms, were for a time to be predominant. France is not now the only nation in which it has taken possession of the thinking minds, which are always the most influential minds; it prevails to a greater or less extent in the majority of the Continental countries. If less sanguine and buoyant, if less confident and bold, than immediately before the first French Revolution, it is more cautious and calculating, for it has learned some prudence and policy from its reverses. Working silently, and under cover of a respect for all religions as alike true, that is alike false, it is working all the more surely; and its scattered forces will at length come to a head, and it will openly proclaim itself, and enter upon the death-struggle for which it is preparing. But whatever be its temporary triumphs, it cannot be permanently successful. The ancient superstition of Europe, containing as it does the strength of the large portion of truth which it embraces, and all the strength of corrupt human nature besides, will be found more than a match for it, and will come forth from victory with a bolder front, and claiming a more formidable authority. Is it in the midst of these contests that the truth of heaven, by the immediate interposition of God, is to shine upon our earth, and scatter all error by the brightness of its rising?

SECT. V.—SCHISM IN THE HUMAN SOUL.

Man is not only not at peace with God—strange and paradoxical as the language may sound, he is not even at peace with himself. There is a schism in the very soul itself.

Two facts here present themselves—the one, that man, by the very constitution of his mind, approves of moral good, and disapproves of moral evil; the other, that he neglects the good and commits the evil. These two facts can be established as clearly as any that fall under the cognizance of the human consciousness; and we must ever hold that the evidence supplied by the internal consciousness is, to say the least of it, as certain and immediate as that of the senses.

On the one hand, man is possessed of certain moral qualities. We may have our own individual opinion as to the psychological nature of these qualities. But for the purpose at present in view we care not how they be explained, whether they be described as belonging to the intellectual or emotional part of man's nature; whether, with Butler, we hold the conscience to be simple and indivisible, or regard it, with Sir James Mackintosh, as the necessary result of certain other operations of the human mind. Dr. Chalmers very justly compares the disputes in regard to the origin or structure of the conscience, to an antiquarian controversy respecting the first formation and subsequent changes of some court of government, the rightful authority of whose decisions and acts is at the same time fully recognised. This moral nature of man is as essential to him as any of his other attributes. The evidence of its existence is so full, that we should as soon believe that man has no such faculty as the understanding, or that he has no emotional nature, as that he is without a conscience. Now, this conscience tells him, and that, too, in spite of the sophisms of the understanding when it happens to be perverted, or of the pleadings of the passions when they are bent upon indulgence, that there is an indelible distinction between good and evil, and points to a Power upholding this distinction in the government of the universe.

But, on the other hand, these fundamental and indestructible principles in the human soul can be made to condemn the possessor. Ethical writers may overlook the fact, but they cannot deny it when the question is put to them. Mankind in general may be inclined to avoid the subject as a painful one, but it requires only to be brought under their notice in order to command their assent. Nay, we believe that they are labouring perpetually under a secret consciousness of such a contradiction in their nature, and that their instinctive avoidance of all allusion to it arises from this very cause. They shrink from it as from a fearful secret, as we have found persons shrinking from the least allusion to a hidden humiliating disease or bodily deformity in their persons, or to certain unfortunate events in their previous life. Certain it is, that when his conduct is brought under review, man is condemned by the very principles in his own bosom.

The wonderful circumstance is, that these things subsist together. Yet, here they are, co-existing in the same breast, and apparently about to exist there for ever, and without an adjustment; for man cannot rid himself of his conscience on the one hand, nor of his sins on the other. The judge is seated for ever upon his throne, and the prisoner is for ever at his bar; and there is no end of the assize, for the prisoner is ever committing new offences to call forth new sentences from the judge.

The double truth, which explains the double fact, has been grasped by Pascal, and developed with singular conciseness and beauty. "The greatness and misery of man being alike conspicuous, religion, in order to be true, must necessarily teach us that he has in himself some noble principles of greatness, and at the same time some profound source of misery. For true religion cannot answer its character, otherwise than by such an entire knowledge of our nature as perfectly to understand all that is great and all that is miserable in it, together with the reasons of the one and of the other." "The philosophers never furnish men with sentiments suitable to these two states. They inculcated a notion either of absolute grandeur, or of hopeless degradation, neither of which is the true condition of man. From the principles which I develop, you may discover the cause of those various contrarieties which have astonished and divided mankind. Now, then, consider all the great and glorious aspirations which the sense of so many miseries is not able to extinguish, and inquire whether they can proceed from any other cause save a higher nature. Had man never fallen, he would have enjoyed eternal truth and happiness; and had man never been otherwise than corrupt, he would have retained no idea either of truth or happiness." "So manifest is it, that we once were in a state of perfection, from which we are now unhappily fallen." "It is astonishing that the mystery which is farthest removed from our knowledge (I mean that of the transmission of original sin) should be that without which we can have no knowledge of ourselves. It is in this abyss that the clue to our condition takes its turns and windings, insomuch that man is more incomprehensible without this mystery than this mystery is incomprehensible to man."*

* Pascal's Thoughts.

CHAPTER III.

THE ACTUAL WORLD, AND THE VIEW WHICH IT GIVES OF ITS GOVERNOR.

SECT. I.—PARTICULAR REVIEW OF THE FIVE PHENOMENA BEFORE SPECIFIED.

THE phenomena which we have been considering are not small and insignificant, nor are they single and isolated; they are large in themselves, and spread over the wide surface of the world and the world's history. They are not mere points on which a perverted ingenuity may construct an inverted pyramid, but a wide base on which reason may rear the largest superstructure. They go far down as among the deepest strata in the structure of our world, and they mount up to the view as among the crowning heights of the landscape.

They are facts on which the thinking portion of mankind have been prone to meditate in all ages and countries, and as they do so, have often become bewildered, and have lost themselves in ever-thickening mazes. How melancholy the feeling of the elder Pliny!—" A being full of contradictions, man is the most wretched of creatures, since the other creatures have no wants transcending the bounds of their nature. Man is full of desires and wants that reach to infinity, and can never be satisfied. His nature is a lie, uniting the greatest poverty with the greatest pride. Among these so great evils, the best thing God has bestowed on man is the power to take his own life."* Sceptics have seen, as they could not but see, these darker features of our world, and have made their own use of them. They have commonly dwelt among these mazes as robbers live in dens, and caves, and forests; and thence they have issued to plunder all that is good, to waste all that is lovely, and to allure the young and adventurous to their haunts, in the hope held out to them of freedom from all restraint. Strange as it may seem, our modern philosophers have generally left these facts very much out of account in constructing their systems, and have jostled them into a kind of separate chapter or appendix, in which they treat of objections to a theory already formed.

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* We quote the condensed account by Neander. Int. Gen. Ch. Hist. It is taken from various places, but especially Natur. Histor., L. ii. C. vii.

The sceptic has revelled in this field as the raven revels in corruption. He finds a kind of fiendish delight in pointing to the apparent oversights and irregularities, blunders and crimes, in the Divine government. The Greek sophists toiled in this work, and rejoiced in the doubt and confusion which they introduced into human speculation. Cotta, the academic in *Cicero de naturâ deorum*—representing that large portion of the learned who wish to inquire into everything, but to believe as little as possible, who ask, What is truth? while not willing to wait for the reply—fondly dwells on the misfortunes and sufferings to which those supposed to be good are so often exposed. "Why, therefore, did the Carthaginians oppress in Spain the two Scipios, among the best and wisest of men?" &c. Volney, in wandering over the ruins of empires, feels a pleasure allied to that of the conquerors who battered down the walls, and set fire to the houses and temples of depopulated cities; he seems as if ridding himself of an enemy who stood in his way, and who was thwarting the schemes on which his heart was set.

Our popular writers on natural religion contemplate with great interest a particular class of phenomena, and, founding on them, they demonstrate that God is a being of infinite benevolence. But the sceptic appears, and points to another order of facts, scarcely, if at all, less numerous and momentous; and insists, that if the one class of facts proves that God is good, the other, on the very same principle, proves that God is malevolent, or that he takes no interest in the world. Placing the one of these conclusions over against the other, they make them, like antagonist forces, destroy each other, and leave nothing but a blank and universal void. But instead of making them oppose each other, let us seek to combine them. We may agree with the theologians who regard them as not contradictory, while we cannot approve of their method of looking to the one and not at all to the other, in forming an idea of the Divine character. We may agree with the sceptic in insisting that the apparent irregularities and disorders to be found in the world should be taken into account, as well as those phenomena which specially reflect the benevolence of God; but instead of admitting his conclusion, we may, from the very combination, attain to a larger and juster comprehension of the state of this world, of the manner in which it is governed, and the attributes of the Governor.

"When," says Hume, in his Essay on Providence and a Future State, "we infer any particular cause from an effect, we must proportion the one to the other." The general principle is a sound one; and by means of it, Hume most effectually destroys all those flimsy fabrics which sentimental writers have reared by putting together all that is fair and attractive, and leaving out of view all that is dark and awful. But while, by carrying out this principle, he has successfully undermined that weak and superficial religion which admits nothing but what is flattering to human pride, he has not used it, nor could it be expected of the sceptic that he should use it, for the uprearing of the fabric of truth. Yet the work of building, whatever the infidel may say to the contrary, is always a greater and nobler work than that of destroying; and the fact that Hume has scarcely developed or demonstrated a single great truth in his philosophical works, is a proof that there was some defect in his mind, both intellectually and morally.* He has shown that, in the common reasonings on the subject of natural theology, the cause is not proportioned to the effect, and that there is much in the effect which finds no place in the cause. But in doing so, he must acknowledge that there are certain phenomena which do constitute an effect, and that this effect must have a cause; and all that we demand is, that he follow out his own principle, and proportion the cause to the effect, and find something in the cause corresponding to all that we see in the effect.

The phenomena contemplated by the man disposed to religion, and those gloated over by the man inclined to doubt, do seem at first sight opposed to one another. They give, in consequence, some appearance of support to that theory which prevailed so extensively for ages in the East among the meditative spirits who dream away existence under a relaxing climate, and according to which there are two parallel or co-ordinate ruling powers in the world ever contending with each other. The speculation is worthy of being alluded to, in so far as it was regarded by some of the deepest thinkers of the East, as furnishing an explanation of events otherwise inexplicable. In modern times, Bayle took refuge in this theory, not because he believed it, but because it supplied him with favourable standing-room, (and this is what the sceptic experiences most difficulty in finding, because, in removing the foundation on which all others rest, he also takes away the foundation on which he himself should rest,) from which he might with greater effect play off his fire indiscriminately on all sides, against religion and against infidelity, against the believer, and against the doubter too. He and others felt that the theory was so far plausible that it professed to give an explanation of two seemingly opposite orders of facts, while other religious schemes only furnish an explanation of one of them. It is not needful to show wherein the weakness of this theory lies. The progress of science has demonstrated to the satisfaction of every mind, that laws and events which may seem discordant do yet form part of one compact system, originating in one designing mind. But if we are not to search for two causes of the effects exhibited in the world, we must, on the principle laid down by Hume, proportion the *one cause* to the character of the *whole effect*.*

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* "I am apt," says Hume, writing to Hutcheson, "to suspect, in general, that most of my reasonings will be more useful by furnishing hints and exciting people's curiosity, than as containing any principles that will augment the stock of knowledge that must pass to future ages." (See Life by Burton.)

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* Philo, the advocate of scepticism in Hume's Dialogues on Natural Religion, endeavours, upon a survey such as we have presented, to shut us up into one or other of four hypotheses regarding the first causes of the universe. "That they are endowed with perfect goodness, that they have perfect malice, that they are opposite and have both goodness and malice, that they have neither goodness nor malice. Mixed phenomena can never prove the two former; unmixed principles, and the uniformity and steadiness of general laws, seem to oppose the third. The fourth, therefore, seems by far the most probable."—P. 11. In these Dialogues the academic Theist is represented as having nothing to urge against this, and the religious Theist (being a complete caricature) urges nothing relevant. We regard the fourth hypothesis as completely disproved by the clear evidences of goodness in the world, and the whole phenomena can be explained on a fifth hypothesis, being that advanced in the text.

We insist, then, that no religious scheme be constructed which does not take into account these five classes of phenomena. Let us contemplate—the more frequently the better—those works of God which reflect, as the placid lake, the serenity of heaven on their bosom; but let us not forget to look also at those angry waves and troubled depths which seem to say that heaven is offended.

Each of the five classes of phenomena has a class of phenomena to which it stands in seeming opposition. Let us review them in order.

1. On the one hand, there are around and within us abundant facts to prove that God delights in the happiness of his creatures. The darkest fears, the deepest jealousies of the human breast cannot bring any man to believe that God is a malignant being. When a disordered mind and an irritated temper would tempt him to draw such a conclusion, he is driven back instantly by objects and feelings which stand up in defence of God. But strangely conflicting with these more pleasing objects, there is the existence of suffering, especially of mental suffering, often intense and long-enduring. With the views which modern research enables us to entertain of the omnipotence of God, we cannot resort to the old Platonic idea of evil proceeding from the restriction or limitation of the Divine power. But if there be design in every part of the works of God, there must be design in the infliction of pain also. If there be a property in the Divine character which leads God to delight in the happiness of his creatures, there must also be a property—call it what you please, and explain it as you may—which leads him, in certain circumstances, to inflict pain. We may suppose that there are two separate attributes having their root in the Divine character; or we may suppose them to be two branches of the same attribute; we may suppose them to be what are called the benevolence and justice of a God essentially good both in his benevolence and justice; or we may suppose them but two modifications of the one attribute of goodness;—but analyze them as we may, and dispute as we may about our explanations, and as to whether these explanations differ in words or ideas, the conclusion rests on indisputable facts, that if God is led by his nature to propagate happiness throughout a boundless universe, he is also led in certain portions of it, to ordain suffering. Behold in the storm and in the sunshine, in health and in disease, in wide-spread

happiness and crowded misery, the proofs both of the goodness and severity of God.

But why does God inflict this misery? Let us look to the other phenomena, and inquire if they can yield us any light.

2. It would be vain to deny that man is allowed a large share of liberty. He feels it, he enjoys it, he uses it, and he abuses it. He is endowed with godlike powers—a memory that enables him to live the past over again, an understanding admitting of great and indefinite improvement, a fancy fluttering among pictures richer than any realities, an imagination which stretches away into the infinite, and a heart of such wide desires that the whole world cannot satisfy them.—Then he is placed in a position affording room for the exercise of his faculties, he has a field of action broader than he can occupy, and the means of exerting the mightiest influence. There are persons who, when they contemplate these facts, delight to speak of the dignity of man's nature and position. He is a god, they conclude, is so honoured by the supreme God, and should be so honoured by us. Dr. Channing is the most eloquent representative of this class of writers, who would have us to look on human nature with unmingled feelings of pride and satisfaction, and who represent all who speak of mankind as degenerate as being the greatest enemies of the race.*

But the picture, however pleasing, is not consistent with other and palpable facts. If man has much freedom allowed him, he is also put under innumerable restraints. His mightiest undertakings often end in confusion, or in results precisely opposite to those contemplated by him. He is interfered with, checked, punished on all hands. He is driven back when he is most eager, disappointed when his hopes may seem to be founded on the best evidence. Cross events which we call accidents, adversity under its various forms, besides the obvious restraints arising from the direct working of the constitution of things in which he is placed, all combine to render him helpless and dependent. He seems to be trusted, and yet he is distrusted. He has liberty—of this he cannot doubt—but he is ever watched as if there was a risk of his abusing it, nay, restricted as if he had already abused the liberty granted him. All nature proclaims that God is good, and yet seems to indicate that, in regard to this world, God is a "jealous God."

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* See Sermon on "Honour all men."

These phenomena exhibit the character of God under an aspect in which many are unwilling to contemplate it. Other phenomena show that God's character comes to be thus exhibited, because of the relation in which he stands to man.

3. The unwearied care which God exercises over this world is a theme on which the piously-disposed mind delights to dwell. It feels a peculiar interest in tracing the wisdom and goodness of God in ordaining and overruling all things; and rejoices to discover that, while controlling and superintending the grand affairs of nations and of worlds, he is also providing for the meanest of the wants of the most insignificant of his creatures. It is manifest that the greatest events are not beyond his control; and yet that those which may seem the least are not beneath his notice.

In seeming contradiction to all this superintending care, there are circumstances which look as if God had abandoned this world to itself, and ceased to take any oversight of it. Near though God may seem, he is felt to be at an infinite distance. Man cannot reach him by any of his struggles. He cannot rise to him by his highest aspirations. These heavens, when he looks up to them, seem to be covered with a perpetual cloud. There must be something coming between, when the beams of God's love, shining perpetually on all holy creatures, are obstructed in regard to man. That intervening cloud cannot come from the heavens, which it merely hides from our eyes, and must rise up therefore from the damps of this earth. In short, it seems as if the good God had been justly offended, and offended with something in the character of man.

To determine what this is, we must now look to the character of man in its relation to God.

4. In looking to the nature of man, we find that there is an invariable characteristic by which he is distinguished, and that is a law in the heart testifying in behalf of what is good. This is of the nature of a fundamental principle. It may be obscured or perverted, but cannot be extinguished or destroyed. But this same moral nature which gives its testimony in behalf of God, gives its testimony against man. That which God indicates in his dealings towards man, man shows that he feels by his conduct towards God. God shows that he is offended with something, and man shows what this is by taking guilt to

himself. The idea, the very name of God, is associated in the human mind with fear. The very propensity to utter blasphemy proves that the party is conscious of some strong inward feeling to which he would show his superiority. Man acknowledges that God is good, and that his law is good ; but he feels that this good God and good law must condemn him, and that they must do so just because they are good. No position can be more unhappy. Were he prepared, when this is his feeling, to prostrate himself before God and confess his utter unworthiness, his case would not be so hopeless. But it is the worst feature of his condition, that while he acknowledges that God is good, and that God is good in condemning him, he seeks, were it possible, to flee from God, or hide himself from him. Conscious all the time that he is wrong, he is driven, by mingled pride and passion, to carry on the contest, or at least to take no proper steps to heal the breach.

We have seen a piece of rock lying bare and exposed at the base of a huge precipice. From the shape of that lesser rock you see that it is a fragment, that it was once joined to the rocks above, that the frosts and storms of winter have loosened it, and there it lies useless and cumbersome, and utterly incapable of being united by human art to the parent mass from which it has been dissevered. It is a picture of the soul of man, torn from its God and fallen into a dreadful abyss. We have only to examine that soul to discover that it was once united to God, but that it has now been cut off, and with no hope, so far as human agency is concerned, of the two being re-united.

5. Looking internally, and at the soul itself, we find that not only is there a schism between man and his Maker, but in the very nature of man himself. He has in his heart a law, which condemns the very heart in which it is placed. He approves of a deed, and neglects to perform it ; he disapproves of a deed, and rushes to the commission of it. Moral excellence is lauded, and yet loathed by him ; while sin is condemned, and yet cherished. All the lines of external proof, we have seen, seem to lead to man as the offending party ; and when we examine his character, we find him conscious of the guilt, and looking as if he was the culprit whose conduct has entailed such misery upon our world.

We have thus endeavoured to converge the scattered rays which are to be found in the darkness of this world into a focus, that we may throw light upon two topics of surpassing interest —the character of God, and his relationship to man. Nature, when rightly interpreted, seems to show that there is in God a property or attribute, call it what you please—by the word holiness, righteousness, or justice—which leads him to inflict suffering, and to intimate his displeasure against sin and those who commit it. It would appear that God indicates his displeasure against man, and men universally take guilt to themselves. God hideth himself from man, and man hideth himself from God. The two stand apart, as we have seen two opposing cliffs which had been rent asunder by some dreadful catastrophe of nature, and have now a yawning gulf between; they look as if they had been united, and as if they might be united once more by some strong power brought to bear upon them, but they continue to stand apart and frown upon each other.

> "They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
> Like cliffs that had been rent asunder;
> A dreary sea now flows between:
> But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
> Shall wholly do away, I ween,
> The marks of that which once hath been."—COLERIDGE.

So far as these facts throw light on the character of man, we are happy to be able to quote from those Thoughts of Pascal, which are in some respects loose as the leaves of the sibyl, but which carry us further into the mysteries of this world than the leaves referred to were supposed to carry the early Romans into the future history of their country. "If man was not made for God, why can he enjoy no happiness but in God? If man was made for God, why is he so opposed to God? Man is at a loss where to fix himself. He is unquestionably out of his way, and feels within himself the remains of a happy state which he cannot retrieve. He searches in every direction with solicitude, but without success, encompassed with unquenchable darkness. Hence arose the contest among the philosophers, some of whom endeavoured to exalt man by displaying his greatness, and others to abase him by representing his misery. And what seems more strange is, that each party borrowed the arguments of the other to establish their own opinion. For the misery of man may be inferred from his greatness, and his greatness from his misery. Thus the one sect demonstrated his misery the more satisfactorily, in that they inferred it from his greatness; and the other the more clearly proved his greatness, because they deduced it from his misery. Whatever was offered by the one to establish his greatness, served only to evince his misery, it being more miserable to have fallen from the greater height. And the converse is equally true. So that, in this endless circle of dispute, each helps to advance his adversary's cause; for it is certain that the more men are enlightened, the more they will discover of human misery and human greatness. In a word, man knows himself to be miserable: he is therefore miserable because he knows himself to be so: But he is also eminently great, because he knows himself to be miserable. What a chimera then is man—what a novelty—what a chaos—what a subject of contradiction! A judge of all things, and yet a worm of the earth; the depositary of the truth, and yet a medley of uncertainties; the glory and the scandal of the universe. If he exalt himself, I humble him; if he humble himself, I exalt him, and press him with his own inconsistencies, till he comprehends himself to be an incomprehensible monster."

SECT. II.—OTHER GENERAL PHENOMENA FITTED TO THROW LIGHT ON THE CONDITION OF THE WORLD.

So far we have proceeded in an inductive method, drawing conclusions from well established facts, all but universally recognised. We may turn to some more general considerations, fitted to throw light on the present state and future prospects of the world.

When the Deity, in the depths of eternity, was purposing (to use human language) the creation of substances different from himself, we can conceive that it might occur to him to create material substances, without a wish or will of any kind, and completely plastic in his hands. But matter, however wrought into beautiful and gorgeous forms, does not reflect the full perfections of God. Besides material substances, the fulness of God's love would prompt him to create spiritual beings with intelligence and free-will. These must, from their very nature, be swayed by influences totally different from those by which God regulates the material universe. It is one of the most noble and godlike qualities of spiritual intelligences, that they are enabled and required to act for themselves. Were the freedom of their will interfered with, they would cease to be what they are, and would be stripped of one of their most exalted and distinguishing features.

To such creatures, their Creator would by some means or other give a law, with power to obey it if they so chose, but with freedom too to disobey it. Virtue is not virtue, properly speaking, when it is constrained. Every praiseworthy deed must be free and spontaneous. But it may be involved in the very nature of a state of freedom, that those who possess it are liable to abuse it. It is conceivable, then, that wherever there are responsible beings, there may also, on the part of some or many, be a disobedience to that law which the Creator hath prescribed as the rule of obedience. A condition of things in which such disobedience is impossible, may presuppose either that no freedom of will has been given, or that it is being interfered with. It is reasonable, no doubt, to suppose that this disobedience must be something of rare occurrence in the dominions of God; but that which is possible may be occurring somewhere, and there may be some individuals, or some races, who have fallen away from the purity in which they were created.

There is nothing unreasonable, then, in the idea that there may be a fallen world somewhere. The pride of the human heart may rebel against the very thought, that the race to which we belong can be thus degenerate. But it is surely not impossible that there may be a world which has thus lapsed into sin; and it is our duty to join the light which observation, reason, and man's moral nature furnish, in order to determine whether we may not be living in such a state of things.

A priori, it may seem as if the chances of our being in a spotless world were much greater than of our being in a fallen world; but we have to do here, not with chances, but with realities—not with conjectural probabilities, but with facts. Judging *à priori*, the actual world is not such as we should suppose it likely that God would fashion. We must set aside our self-formed conceptions of what is probable, and taking things as they are, inquire what view the facts before our eyes, and revealed to our consciousness, give of this world and of its relation to its Governor.

There are indications in the world, as it appears to us, of four great general truths.

FIRST, THERE ARE INDICATIONS OF THE BEAUTIFUL, THE BENEFICENT, AND THE GOOD. These features strike the senses, impress the fancy, and move the soul of all. The painter delights to exhibit them to the eye, and the poet to the mind; the man of taste expatiates in their grandeur and beauty; while the religious man feels as if they helped him upward to the contemplation of the perfections of God.

SECONDLY, THERE ARE INDICATIONS OF THE LOVELY AND THE GOOD BEING MARRED AND DEFACED. There is disorder in the very midst of order; there is sin in the very heart which approves of excellence. The useful becomes destructive, and the good has become evil. We feel in treading the ground, as if we were walking over the withering leaves of a life which had decayed. We cannot but admire the magnificence which everywhere meets our eye; yet it is with an associated feeling of melancholy, like that which the traveller experiences when he surveys Baalbec or Palmyra, Luxor and Carnac. The wise and the good have ever been inclined to look upon this world as but the ruin of its former greatness. Man, and the world in which he dwells, retain many traces of their former greatness. The ruins of a palace differ from the ruins of a hut. In the former, the work of desolation may be more complete than in the latter; but we find here and there in the one what we cannot find in the other—a column or statue of surpassing beauty, indicating what the building was when it came forth from the hands of its maker. Not only so, but a palace in ruins is a grander object than a hut when entire. "The stately ruins are visible to every eye that bear in their front (yet extant) this doleful inscription—Here God once dwelt. Enough appears of the admirable frame and structure of the soul of man to show that the Divine presence did once dwell in it, more than enough of vicious deformity to proclaim he is now retired and gone." "Look upon the fragments of that curious sculpture which once adorned the palace of that Great King—the relics of common notions—the lively prints of some undefaced truth—the fair ideas of things—the yet legible precepts that relate to practice. Behold with what accuracy the broken pieces show these to have been engraven by the finger of God; and how they be torn and scattered, one in this dark corner, and another in that, buried in heaps of dust and rubbish."*

But these two truths do not constitute the whole truth; and there are persons who, having discovered this, rashly conclude that the one or other is not a truth at all. There is A THIRD TRUTH to be taken into account by those who would give a rational explanation of existing circumstances. Besides the traces of original beauty and subsequent degradation, THERE ARE PROOFS OF RECONSTRUCTION OR REORGANIZATION. No one can understand the condition of the world in which he lives, except by looking to all these characteristics. Those who have confined their view to one or two of them, have found themselves in the heart of inexplicable enigmas. Persons who look only to the grandeur of the universe, are confounded every day with occurrences strangely at variance with the views which they entertain of the perfection of the world. Those who regard this earth as utterly cursed, without considering its original perfection, are obliged, in holding their opinions, to shut their eyes to the loveliness which is everywhere visible, if they will but behold it. Nor have those who represent this world as a temple in ruins, reached the whole truth. In a ruin, everything is abandoned and desolate. The parts of the fabric yet entire, and the heaps of rubbish, are alike tenantless and useless. The whole scene is waste, and, through neglect, is becoming more and more horrific. But our earth is not thus deserted. Care the most watchful is exercised over it, and over every the most minute fragment of it. We discover the lamentable results of a mighty conflict, but no signs of neglect or abandonment. In a ruin, everything is misplaced; and, except when accident has so determined in some of its freaks, the contiguous objects do not fit into or aid each other. But in this world we discover everywhere the nicest adaptation of part to part, and power to power. Amidst seeming confusion, there is a grand pervading unity of design. For the purposes contemplated, nothing is wanting, while there is nothing superfluous. Chateaubriand developed a greater truth than he was at all aware of, when he described this world as a "*temple fallen, and rebuilt with its own ruins.*"†

"We are not to look upon this world as a perfect world," says Butler, expressing the view of every sober thinker. But the reflecting mind follows up this admission by the inquiry, Why is it not perfect ? Care must be taken, lest the acknowledgment that the world is not perfect land us in the conclusion that God is not perfect.* The one element of imperfection in this world is the character of man. We have already referred to the grounds on which we can vindicate (while we do not profess to explain) the existence of sin, under the government of a God who rules his responsible creatures by moral influences which do not interfere with the freedom of the will. But whatever may be the solution of the difficulty which proceeds from the existence of moral evil, we hold it to be of great moment to establish the doctrine that this world is perfect considered in reference to those who dwell in it. There may be a difference of opinion as to whether a satisfactory explanation can be given of the origin of evil, or whether there can be any other than the one already hinted at; but moral evil being supposed to exist, it is of the last importance to show that the other apparent evils flow from it,—" After it, the permission of sin," says Leibnitz, " is justified, the other evil in its train presents no difficulty, and we are now entitled to resort to the evil of sin to give a reason for the evil of pain."† Moral evil being presupposed, it may now be shown that physical evil in no way reflects on the character of God. There are perverted minds who may not think the government of God perfect because it ordains pain and sorrow, and provides restraints and penalties; but if they follow out their principles, they must conclude that God is not perfect. With the proofs so abundant of the perfection of God, in respect of all other departments of his works, it becomes us to inquire whether his government be not perfect in respect also of the appointment of suffering and punishment.

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* Howe's Living Temple.

† Génie du Christianisme.

In the simple and single parts of God's works, whether in the mineral or animal or vegetable kingdoms, we never discover a mean without an end. There is a use, for instance, for every nerve and muscle, every bone and joint, of the animal frame. Physiologists all proceed on the principle that there is nothing unnecessary in the organization of plants and animals; and the careful investigation of parts which seemed useless led Cuvier and others to some of their grandest discoveries. It is upon this principle that the geologist and comparative anatomist proceed, in the inferences which they draw from the animal remains found among the rocks. That bone, they conclude, must have served a purpose, and belonged to a living creature; and from the examination of it, they arrive at a knowledge of the shape, size, food, and habits of an animal which may have been extinct for myriads of ages. Proceeding on this principle, they can clothe the bones with sinews and flesh, and furnish a painting in which the living animals are seen browsing among the reeds and ferns and trees of an ancient world.

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* See Hume's Dialogues on Natural Religion, where this conclusion is drawn.

† Essays on the Goodness of God, p. iii. § 265.

We believe that there is as little of useless waste in the more complicated dealings of God's providence as in the construction of plants and animals. The most ordinary observer may discover that all the events of God's providence are linked or dovetailed together. The most rapid concentrations of the various parts of an army towards a point by the pre-arrangement of the general, the most skilful adjustment of wheel and cylinder in an ingenious machine, do not so impress us with all-pervading purpose and plan, as the combinations and concatenations of events in the providence of God. The whole analogy of nature, then, prevents us from imagining that disease and sorrow, with the manifest restraints and punishments laid upon man, are incidental or accidental. It would indeed be strange, while everything else subserved a purpose, to find such painful dispensations permitted without an end to accomplish by them.

But to return from this seeming digression, we find everywhere in the world traces of original grandeur and subsequent ruin, and we find both united in a compact, and in some respects harmonious, whole. Our world in this respect resembles those conglomerate rocks which are, indeed, the detritus of an earlier formation, and seem now to be a curious jumble, but which, notwithstanding, through the binding together of the parts, are among the hardest and most consistent of all rocks in their texture.

We see before us now, not a ruin, but a compact fabric—

> "A ruin, yet what a ruin!—from its mass
> Walls, palaces, half cities have been reared."

The impression left upon our mind is not so much like that produced by Thebes, or the cities of the desert, as by modern Jerusalem, still a city, but in singular contrast with its former greatness. There are evidences that the building is far inferior to the original one; and here and there you see a stone of the first fabric, in some respects sadly out of place, yet admirably fitted to uphold the existing structure. That fabric is not a perfect one, such as it seems once to have been, but it is in every respect suited to the imperfect individuals who dwell in it. It resembles those palaces which have been turned into hospitals, retaining marks of their having been originally designed for a nobler purpose, and causing us to sigh over the degradation to which they have been subjected, but accommodated, notwithstanding, by a wonderful dexterity, to the good end which they now serve.

Such are the intimations of nature; but nature goes little farther, it must be confessed, than to raise salutary fears and stir up inquiry. It prompts us to put questions which it does not deign to answer. It calls up fears which it cannot allay. It ever conducts to a yawning gulf covered with clouds. There may be a country beyond, but it does not show it. There may be a passage to that land, but it does not disclose it. Still there are times when the mists seem to open, and show a better destiny to the human family, and a passage to it. There are times when, like Columbus as he approached the coasts of the new world, we think we see in the night a light from the country in whose existence we are inclined to believe. But this leads us to observe that—

FOURTHLY, THERE ARE INDICATIONS OF INTENDED RENOVATION. For why has this world, so manifestly under the displeasure of God, been preserved? As a prison-house, our fears would suggest. But hope, equally natural with fear to the human breast, immediately throws out the idea that it may be as a school of discipline and probation. It certainly does not appear to be exclusively a school for training to virtue—for there are signal judgments inflicted on the wicked, not to train them, but, so far as this world is concerned, to put an end to discipline. But still less does it seem to be altogether a prison, and fitted merely for punishment—for there are innumerable means of improvement and incentives to excellence. May it not be, that it is a place of probation preparatory to a final judgment and consummation?

The very preservation of this world in its present state seems to show that God does not intend it merely as a place of punishment. Among the withered leaves on which we tread there are to be found the seeds of a coming renovation, and these leaves are preserved for a time that the seeds may germinate in the midst of them. A soil is being pulverized for the support of a new and a better life. In this world there are evidences of God's hatred of evil; there are also proofs of his disposition to mercy and grace. The human mind has ever been prone to fancy that this world is yet to be the theatre of great events, in which all the perfections of God's character are to be displayed. Tradition has delighted to converse, and poetry to sing, of a golden age as the commencing one in our world's history; and both have fondly looked forward to a time when all things are to be restored to their primal purity. But tradition retains only such portion of the truth as recommends itself to the principles of the human heart, and true poetry ever sings in accordance with the native feelings; and surely philosophy should not pour contempt on those high expectations which form the noblest aspirations of human nature, and which we may suppose God would not have allowed to remain, if there is to be no means of gratifying them.

God seems to have departed from our world: but as if to prove his remaining interest in it, he hath left a train of light behind. We do feel as if there were light lingering upon our world, like that which rests upon the earth in the darkest hour of a summer's night, left by a sun which has set, but which may yet appear, or sent before by a sun soon to arise. Even when our fears do most harass us, we discover tokens for good. We see, it is true, no sun as yet appearing above the horizon; but on the earth itself, on some of its higher elevations, on some of its more prominent peaks rising up from among the darkest shadows, or on some of the clouds which overhang it, we discover a kindling light, which seems to show that there is a glorious luminary yet to rise, and that our earth is to be visited by a brighter and more glorious era.

Some persons may be inclined to argue, that we could never have discovered these truths from nature alone without the aid of revelation. With such parties we are not inclined to enter into a contest. Provided their statements be sufficiently guarded, we may probably agree with them, and may at the same time, and with perfect consistency, maintain, that though there is a difficulty in interpreting nature these are the very truths which nature teaches. Let it be granted that the writing inscribed on the works of God is not very clear, still the letters are there, and start into legibility upon being placed under the power of divine truth. It required the genius of Copernicus and Newton to discover the true theory of the heavens; but when that theory is known, it needs no such sagacity to observe that it is confirmed by every phenomenon before our eyes. It may require, in like manner, a supernatural light to give the true explanation of the mysteries of nature; but now, with that explanation before us, we see that nature has many of its most difficult knots unravelled by it.

Not only so, but the very fact that the Scriptures furnish such an explanation of nature, may be regarded as a proof of their heavenly origin. The writings on the tombs and temples of ancient Egypt long baffled the skill of the most distinguished scholars. It was the Rosetta stone, with its triple inscriptions, one of them being Greek and a translation of the two hieroglyphical ones, which first furnished, or rather suggested, the discovery of the key. The key thus suggested by the Greek translation is shown to be a true one, by the number of hidden meanings which it has satisfactorily opened. Let it be acknowledged, if persons insist on it, that the inscriptions on the works of God are not very easily deciphered; still, should it be found that a professed revelation explains them, and that the two coincide, there is evidence furnished in behalf both of the genuineness of the revelation, and the correctness of the interpretation which has been put upon nature. As it opens chamber after chamber, we become convinced that we have at last found the true key. "A person discovering the proofs of the Christian religion is like an heir finding the title-deeds of his estate. Shall he condemn them as counterfeit, or cast them aside without examination?" "Who can do otherwise than admire and embrace a religion which contains the complete knowledge of truths which we still know the better the more we receive?"*

We are as yet, however, but in the vestibule of the temple of nature; and some may regard us as speculating beyond the evidence within our range of vision. All we ask of such is, that they now follow us into the temple itself; and we must be prepared to abandon the views which have suggested themselves, if they are not confirmed upon the most minute and rigid examination of the physical and moral governments of God.

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* Pascal's Thoughts.

METHOD OF THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT.

BOOK SECOND.

PARTICULAR INQUIRY INTO THE METHOD OF THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT IN THE PHYSICAL WORLD.

In the exploring expedition on which we have set out, we have, first, as from a height, taken a general survey of the country before us, as the traveller will do, when circumstances admit, at the outset of his journey. We are now to descend to a detailed examination of the territory whose outline we have been surveying. In the first instance, we are to enter into the heart of the physical world as the same bears relation to man, and we are then to consider the character of man as under the government of God. As a suitable conclusion, we may gather the results together, and view them in combination.

CHAP. I.—GENERAL LAWS; OR, THE PRINCIPLE OF ORDER.

SECT. I.—DIFFERENT THINGS DENOTED BY THE PHRASE "LAWS OF NATURE"—PROPERTIES OF MATTER, CAUSES, AND GENERAL LAWS.

The most ignorant and careless observer cannot contemplate the works of nature without discovering many indications of the existence of general laws. Science, in its progress, has been widening the dominion of law, and has detected its presence where the unlearned saw only caprice, and where the piously disposed were accustomed to contemplate the Divine power acting independently of all instrumental causes. It is now acknowledged that there are physical laws determining every "fitful breeze, and every forming cloud, and every falling shower." But while there is a universal recognition among the reflecting community of the existence of general laws, there is about as universal a confusion of idea as to their nature. An inquiry into this topic may help to clear away much cloudiness of conception, in which not a few errors are lurking.

"Without going into any subtilties," says Sir John Herschel, "I may be allowed to suggest, that it is at least high time that philosophers, both physical and others, should come to some nearer agreement than seems to prevail as to the meaning they intend to convey in speaking of causes and causation. On the one hand, we are told that the grand object of physical inquiry is to explain the nature of phenomena by referring them to their causes; on the other, that the inquiry into causes is altogether vain and futile, and that science has no concern but with the discovery of laws. Which of these is the truth? Or are both views of the matter true, on a different interpretation of the terms? Whichever view we may take, or whichever interpretation we may adopt, there is one thing certain, the extreme inconvenience of such a state of language. This can only be reformed by a careful analysis of the widest of all human generalizations, disentangling from one another the innumerable shades of meaning which have got confounded together in its progress, and establishing among them a rational classification and nomenclature. Until this be done, we cannot be sure, that by the relation of cause and effect, one and the same kind of relation is understood."* The remark of this distinguished philosopher is one of the many signs of the times which indicate, that though scientific men are commonly disposed to turn away from metaphysical philosophy, they will soon be compelled to betake themselves to it; not only with the view of constructing a correct logic of physical investigation, but for the very purpose of expelling the errors which have taken refuge in the region of fundamental principles—a region, no doubt, often covered with clouds, but where all the streams of science have their fountains.

We have long felt the desideratum to which Sir John Herschel refers, and we have especially felt it when seeking to discuss the questions which fall to be answered in the inquiry into the physical government of God. It would be presumptuous in us to profess to supply what so many have felt to be wanting, and yet have not been able to furnish. The subjects to be discussed, however, require us to make the attempt. While we endeavour to disentangle a web which appears to many to be so complicated, and hope thereby to throw some light on the connexion of God with his works, we are at the same time convinced that many of the conclusions to be drawn, in the subsequent parts of this book, are to a great extent independent of any particular theory which may be formed or preferred in regard to the precise nature of general laws, or the relation between cause and effect.

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* President's Address to British Association, 1845.

In reflecting, with the view of determining its nature, upon the Material world—and we wish it to be remarked that in this book we treat of nothing but the Material world—we are led at the very first glance to see that it is composed of a number of substances, simple and compound, possessing properties. We do not require to enter upon the metaphysics of substance and quality; we are not to defend, nor are we to impugn, either the popular view on the one hand, or the various philosophic theories on the other. We assume, what all must assume—except absolute sceptics, who are beneath, or transcendental idealists, who are above the reach of evidence—that there are material substances possessing properties. Nor are we in this treatise to speak of those properties of matter by which it affects the mind through the nervous system and brain. These are important objects of inquiry, but they do not fall to be prosecuted in this place, in which we confine ourselves to a topic which will be found to be sufficiently wide—the mode of action of the Physical world.

In contemplating matter with the view of discovering its qualities, we cannot avoid perceiving that, first of all, it possesses the property of extension, or rather that of occupying space. This property was regarded as its essential quality by Descartes; and it certainly does seem to us to be an essential constituent of our cognition of matter, and implied in all its actual operations.*

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* See Sir William Hamilton's analysis of this quality, and also remarks on the dynamical theory of matter in APPENDIX II. ON THE QUALITIES OF MATTER. Modern physical investigation has entirely set aside the idea, still lingering among metaphysicians, that extension is the only essential quality of matter: dynamical energy is also essential. On the other hand, the dynamical theory of matter commonly overlooks extension, and errs besides in regarding the powers of matter as mere *forces*, (a word of limited signification,) whereas they are *properties* with a vast variety of *kinds* of action.

Conjoined with this fundamental one, we find in all bodies an indefinite number of other properties, such as attraction and repulsion, chemical affinity and degrees of cohesion, producing the gaseous, the liquid, and solid states, with certain powers in reference to light, heat, and electricity. By these properties, *bodies are capable of producing changes on each other.* This production of changes is not variable or capricious, but follows certain fixed laws. Bodies, simple and compound, separate and in union, in mechanical and chemical combination, change and are changed according to certain rules. These are the *properties* of the substance, and all bodies have their definite and measurable properties, that is, a determinate method of producing changes on each other. Such is the very constitution of material substances, and such the very constitution of the world as consisting of these substances. "Nothing," says Bacon, "exists in nature except individual bodies, producing pure individual acts, according to the law which governs them."*

In looking more narrowly into the nature of these properties, we find that no given body acts upon itself. Bodies, when they act, act upon each other. Putrefaction and similar processes may seem an exception, but they are so only in appearance, for in all such cases, the separate elements of which the body is composed act on one another. Could we take any one body, or particle of a body, and separate it from the action of all other bodies, it would continue in the state in which we have put it for ever. In order to a change in that body, there must be another body operating upon it. It thus appears that the powers which one body has of changing another, or of being itself changed, constitute the properties of the body, and that all the properties of any given body have a reference to some other body or bodies, and to the production of change upon that body or these bodies. The only exceptions that we can think of are to be found in those properties of matter by which it affects mind, and the quality of extension, which has a reference to space rather than to other matter.

In order to action, to change, there must therefore be more than one body. There is not, so far as we can see, a self-acting material substance in nature. It is the first law of motion—that is, of all the mechanical sciences—that a body will continue in the state in which it has been put, whether of motion or rest, for ever, unless operated upon *ab extra.* Matter is equally passive in regard to chemical action. Nay, there is required in order to action, to change, not only a plurality of bodies, but a relation between the properties of these bodies. Oxygen and hydrogen, for instance, unite because they possess the quality of a mutual affinity, and they will not combine except in certain proportions, being according to the law of their affinity. All action or change thus originates in the conjunct operation of two or more bodies, and implies a relation between their properties so as to admit of their mutual action. A material substance existing *alone* in the universe *could not produce any effects.* Give us *two* material substances, and effects *may* follow. Give us these substances in a *relation suited to their properties*, and effects *will* follow. All changes, all effects, do thus proceed from the properties of two or more bodies, these bodies having a relation to each other which enables their properties to act.

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* Nov. Org., Lib. ii. Aph. ii.

When it is said that matter is passive and dependent, every one feels that there is a truth announced which at once commends itself to the judgment. On the other hand, Leibnitz and a class of speculators increasing in the present day, endeavour to demonstrate that matter is active. May not both views contain partial truth? We believe the whole truth to lie in the double doctrine, that matter has inherent active properties, but that these properties are of such a kind that they cannot act unless there is a proper relation adjusted for them. Each separate substance, viewed *per se*, is inert, and will continue in the state in which it happens to be till operated upon *ab extra.* In order to action, there must therefore be two or more bodies, having relation to each other in respect of their properties. In order to beneficial action, there must be a skilfully arranged, and we believe divinely appointed, relation of bodies to one another. In respect of its properties, matter is active, it has a *virtus*, (this is the word which Leibnitz* uses as explanatory of his meaning,) and we believe that it would be as irreligious as it is unphilosophical to deny this its inherent power. "In that great system," says Brown, "which we call the universe, all things are what they are in consequence of God's primary will; but if they were wholly incapable of affecting anything, they would virtually themselves be as nothing."* But then, in order to the exercise of this their capacity, there is need of an adjustment; and in order to its beneficial exercise, there is required a beneficial arrangement, made, we believe, by the same Being who imparted to them the capacity itself.

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* See Lettre iv., Œuvres, par M. A. Jacques, Prem. Ser. There are curious discussions in the whole of the lesser works of Leibnitz.

It follows that all causes, so far as they are material, must be complex. An effect cannot be the result of a single substance or a single property, but of two or more substances with their properties, and these in a relation to each other admitting of their mutual action. It follows, that in all inquiry into causes, we should seek for the properties of two bodies at the least, and a condition or conditions enabling them to act. We say in a loose way that the beams of the sun are the cause of the colouring of the leaves of plants; but the true cause is a complex one, embracing not only the beams with their properties, but the chlorophyll and juices of the leaves with their properties. The sunbeams alone would not produce the effects—there must be the concurrence of the chlorophyll, (when the leaf is green;) and it is when the two meet that the leaves are made to take the lively hue of summer, this hue varying with the variation of its concurrent causes, (concause,) being different in plants under the shade from what it is in plants in the sunshine, and differing, by reason of the difference of composition, in every different species of plant. We are accustomed to speak of a frosty night as having nipped the plant found dead in our garden; but surely the vital properties of the plant are as essential agents as the frost in the series of effects produced. A ball in motion strikes a ball at rest and sets it in motion; the cause here is to be sought, not merely in the first ball—the ball in motion, but likewise in the property or susceptibility of the second ball—the ball at rest; and as the cause is complex, so the effect is complex also, and comprises not merely the ball once at rest but now in motion, but the ball in motion now slackened or stayed in its movement. We commonly say, and the language is correct enough for common use, that air acting on iron produces rust; but when we spread out the whole phenomenon, we find that the cause, properly speaking, lies in the aïr and iron in a particular relation, and that the effect also embraces both the air and the iron—the air having had a portion of its oxygen, and the iron a portion of its substance, abstracted, and the rust produced being a compound of the iron and oxygen.

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* Brown on Cause and Effect, P. i. § 5, p. 105, 3d ed.

In the ordinary style of speaking and writing, we fix on one of the concurring precedents as the *cause*, and we call the other the *circumstances*, and we speak of the same cause in the same circumstances producing the same effects. In fixing on one of the precedents as the cause, we commonly single out the one which is most prominent, or to which we wish to give the greatest prominence. But when we speak of the real cause, the unconditional cause, the cause which will for ever be followed by the effects, we must embrace not only what is vulgarly called the cause, but also the *circumstances* or *conditions*—as in the above illustrations—not only the sunbeams, but the juices also; not only the frost, but the nature of the plant; not only the ball in motion, but the ball at rest; not only the air, but the iron. It is only when we do this, and make the maxim take this form—that the same material substances, bearing the same relation in respect of their properties, always produce the same effects—that it becomes philosophically correct.* Even for practical purposes, it is often desirable that it should assume this form, for as long as we merely talk of the cause being followed by the same effect in *similar* circumstances, we are apt to lose ourselves in determining what constitutes the similar circumstances.†

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* These views had occurred to the author before he read Mr. John S. Mill's very masterly work on Logic. Mr. Mill has seen the defect in the common statements, but has not, in consequence of not giving the properties of bodies their proper place, discovered the thorough rectification. "The statement of the cause is incomplete, unless in some shape or other we introduce all the conditions. A man takes mercury, goes out of doors, and catches cold. We say, perhaps, that the cause of his taking cold was exposure to the air. It is clear, however, that his having taken mercury may have been a necessary condition of his catching cold; and though it might consist with usage to say that the cause of his attack was exposure to the air, to be accurate we ought to say, that the cause was exposure to air while under the effect of mercury. (Book III. chap. v. § 3, ed. 3d.) The true cause here was the body in a particular state—that is, under mercury—and the air in a particular state; and the co-existence of the two is necessary to the production of the effect. Mr. Mill has seen that the unconditional cause is often (it is always) dual or plural, but he has not noticed that the effect must be the same. The true cause consists of two or more bodies in a particular state; the true effect consists of the same bodies in a different state. Hence Mr. Mill's error, (Book III. chap. x. § 1,) in supposing that the same effect can be produced by several causes. A part of the effect may, but not the whole.

† See farther discussion on the RELATION BETWEEN CAUSE AND EFFECT, in Appendix III.

We are now in a position to understand what is meant by the laws of nature. We may mean three different things, which ought to be carefully distinguished.

First, The properties of bodies, or their power of producing changes on each other. As examples, we may give the power which all matter has to attract other matter—which oxygen has to combine chemically with carbon in certain proportions—which an alkali has to destroy the sourness of an acid—which an acid has to redden vegetable blues—which light has to blacken chloride of silver, and the power which the cellular tissues of living bodies possess of absorbing contiguous matter. In using the phrase in this sense, we must always remember that properties, in order to action, require an adjustment of two or more bodies to each other.

Secondly, The relation of the cause in actual operation to its effects, or the action of two or more bodies so adjusted that their properties operate. Thus, while the power of the sunbeams to colour the vegetable juices may be regarded as a property, the sunbeams and juices so acting as to colour the leaves may be regarded as a cause in actual operation. The power of oxygen to combine with iron is a property of the oxygen, but a property having reference to the iron; the oxygen and iron concurring to produce rust, is an example of a cause. We have also illustrations of causes in the co-operation of the oxygen and carbon, of the alkali and acid, of the cellular tissues and the inorganic substances on which they work. It is only in the sense now before us that we can speak with propriety of the *action* of a law of nature. But let it be observed, that such a law, when in continued action, implies a continuation of the relation of two or more bodies to each other.

Thirdly, A generalized set of facts, or objects and events grouped together by points of resemblance. We have observed that all quadrupeds are mammalia, and that children are of the same species as their parents, and we call these general facts, laws of nature. Of this same description are the laws of the revolution of the seasons, of human mortality, of the distribution of the plants over the earth's surface, of the variation of the magnetic needle, and those empirical laws regarding heat and electricity which scientific inquirers are so earnestly seeking to discover in the present day. We see at once how these generalized facts or laws differ from causes. That day and night follow each other may be represented as a general law; but we cannot speak of the night causing the day, or the day causing the night. Using the term "law of nature" in the sense of a generalized set of facts, we cannot speak of the action of a general law, or ascribe to it a power of production.* These generalized or general laws, it may be farther noticed, are not simple but composite, and the result, as we shall see in a future section, of adjustments often very complicated and recondite.

The power of the sun's rays to colour vegetable juices, is an example of a property. The sun's rays falling on the juices, is an instance of a cause—the two components of which are the sun's rays and the chemical elements of the leaves. Those cosmical arrangements by which the sun's rays fall daily on the plants, and by which they fall on them more powerfully and for a greater length of time during summer—these give the annual cycle of the colouring of the leaves of plants, which may be taken as an illustration of a general law, the result of the mutual adjustment of many bodies possessing different properties.

It is of the utmost importance that we be able to separate these three things. To some extent connected, in that they all imply order, they differ in other and more important respects. Properties are simple, being the rule of the action of bodies upon one another. Material causes are always duplex or complex, implying the exercise of the properties of more than one body. General laws are necessarily multiplex, and are not the causes but the results of a vast number of arrangements. The first, or properties as we shall call them, are capable of action only when certain needful conditions are fulfilled. The second, or causes, are these properties in operation in consequence of the conditions of action being furnished. The third, or general laws as we shall call them, are a collection of natural objects so resembling each other that we class them together. In a loose way, it may be proper enough to call them all by one name, as significant of the order which reigns in the world; but in doing so there is always a risk of our sliding unconsciously from the one to the other, and predicating of one what is true only of another, or of all what is true only of one.

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* While preparing this 4th edition, we are gratified to notice a similar statement by M. Prévost, just published in Sir William Hamilton's edition of Stewart, vol. iii., Ap., Art. II. "Je passe à remarquer la différence entre *loi* et *cause*. Une loi est un rapport . . . une généralization; une loi ne peut agir. Il faut donc un agent; une cause, pour réaliser un changement."

In contemplating the world at a given instant—the CONTEMPORANEOUS WORLD—we find it composed of substances with their properties adjusted to each other. These *properties* (and not laws) constitute the primary, or rather the sole moving power residing in the physical world. Again, in contemplating the SUCCESSIVE WORLD, or the world in its changes, we find the substances actually operating according to their properties, and we have *causes* producing effects. We examine now the results produced, and we find that these properties and causes have been so arranged as to produce *general laws*, or a beautiful order in respect of number, form, time, and colour throughout the whole of nature.

If these views be correct, properties variously combined are the spring of all action, of all production in physical nature; leading, in consequence of their adjustment to causal operations, and as the result of their skilful combination, to general laws, which can be noticed by the intelligent observer. The arrangements of nature are often very complicated, and it is difficult to arrive at the original properties from which action proceeds, and of which general laws are the result. But properties of bodies seem to be the powers at the base of all action, and they are the powers which we reach in the last resort in the inquiry into the processes of the material universe.

All action of material substances implies adjustment; all operation of cause and effect, the existence of similar circumstances; and general effects or laws imply the continuance of the same adjusted circumstances. In order to the production of any effect, there must be substances in an adjusted relation to each other. In order to the production of a succession of general effects, these substances must continue to bear the same relation, or the relation must be recurrent or repeating. These views, however, will be better comprehended after taking a survey of the illustrations of adjustment to be given in the next section.

But before closing this section, the remark is forced upon us, that if these distinctions had been kept in view, we should never have heard of gravitation or any other property of matter being represented as a principle capable of creating or sustaining the universe, for it would have been seen that the properties of natural substances require certain adjustments as conditions of their action, or at least beneficial action. Nor would we have heard of a mere general fact being employed to explain the production of any phenomenon. There is an important class of the sciences, which may be called the CLASSIFICATORY, embracing the various branches of natural history, and in them the laws are of that description which we have arranged as the THIRD, being mere general facts observed by experience. These sciences are satisfied when they can group objects into classes in the manner referred to. But all investigation into production or change carries us at last to substances with their qualities. Scientific investigation has gone, we apprehend, to its farthest point, when it has discovered the substances and qualities, and the conditions needful to their operation. The mind will not rest till it reaches this limit ; for it knows that all given phenomena must proceed from certain bodies, having fixed properties which it is bent upon discovering. Having gone this length, it should feel that it can go no farther. In astronomy, we arrive at last at gravitation, and the relation of the celestial bodies which enables that property to act, and we feel that inquiry must now cease. In chemistry, we ascertain that a certain compound is composed of two or more elementary substances, which unite according to a certain rule, and the mind must rest here for ever, for it can get no farther.

These views might be usefully applied to check all those rash conclusions which men of science, falsely so called, have been drawing in regard to the formation and past history of the world, which they would explain by referring them to the laws of nature, these laws being the mere generalized facts of natural history.* Truly these persons know not what they mean by the laws of nature, though no phrase is so frequently in their mouths. To refer a phenomenon to a law, in the sense in which they use the word, is merely to show that certain other phenomena resemble it in some respects, but does not furnish an explanation of its production; nay, it brings instead under notice other phenomena, all requiring to be explained as to the manner of their production. Events, whether we are or are not able to arrange them in a law—that is, in a class—have all a producing cause different from themselves. We are entitled to demand of those who would explain all nature by natural law, that they point out a cause of those products which they think they have sufficiently explained when they have arranged them in a class. When we are constrained to acknowledge in regard to any phenomenon, that it could not have had a cause in a material substance, the mind will not rest satisfied till it call in a spiritual substance possessed of such power and intelligence as to be able to produce the effects.

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* That there is an order and progression—that is, a law—in the works of creation, is implied in the Scripture account of the six days, (however interpreted,) and follows from the discoveries of geologists, and should be frankly admitted by the opponents of the author of the "Vestiges of Creation." But order is not production. The fact that one colour runs into another in a painting is no proof that the one colour produces the other. The author's *real* facts prove that there is an order in the works of God, but do not show that there is any power in nature capable of producing a new species of animal, or of transmuting one species into another.

Let it be observed, too, how widely the argument for an intelligent cause of the material universe extends. In all physical action there is the presence of two or more bodies with their properties, and an adjustment as the condition of their operation. It is this circumstance which renders matter so inert in itself, and so dependent on the Governor of the world. Matter can act only when arrangements are made for it, and can act beneficently only when the arrangements are beneficent. But the power of making arrangements cannot be found within the capacity of dead or—if any one prefers it—of living matter. The skill and benevolence shown in these arrangements conduct to the belief in a skilful and benevolent cause. The argument for the existence of God is thus widened, and rendered as extensive as the action of the physical universe.

SECT. II.—ADJUSTMENT OF THE MATERIAL SUBSTANCES WITH THEIR PROPERTIES TO EACH OTHER.

An approximation has been made to an enumeration of the elementary substances in nature. There has been no attempt, however, to number the properties of matter. The essential properties of matter—that is, the properties found in matter under every form—have been ascertained, it is supposed; but the separate qualities of the elementary substances have not been determined, and no one has proposed to himself the task of defining all the qualities of the compound substances in the animal, the vegetable, and the mineral kingdoms. Science is making vigorous efforts to master the whole domains of nature; but its investigations are ever opening new wonders, of the existence of which the imagination did not so much as dream. In every part of nature there are latent powers at work, giving intimations, by signs which cannot be mistaken, of their existence, but not deigning to afford any insight into their nature.

It is out of these substances, simple and compound, with their several properties, that God hath constructed the visible universe. We speak of the *construction* of the universe as something separate from, and additional to, the simple substances and properties; for it is possible to conceive of the matter of the universe with its properties being the same, and yet the universe being different from the existing one, for the powers, instead of conspiring and co-operating, might have only opposed and thwarted each other, and resulted, not in order, but in a never-ending confusion, worse than the chaos which the poets describe.

It is delightful to find that, at this part of our inquiries, we can refer to one who combined in himself qualities which are often dissevered in others—the popular orator and scientific inquirer, the philosopher and divine, uniting simple faith with the boldest spirit of speculation, standing firmly on the earth while he measures the heavens, and after his imagination has taken the widest excursions, and his understanding has constructed the noblest theories, ever returning to sit at the feet of his Divine teacher. Adopting the views set forth in those portions of Dr. Chalmers's Bridgewater Treatise and Natural Theology, in which he treats of what he calls the collocations or dispositions of matter, we hope to be able to give them a greater extension, and a more special definiteness.

There are, it appears, about sixty elementary substances in nature with their separate rules of action, and there are combinations of these elementary substances, and of the properties possessed by them, so many that they cannot be numbered, and so diversified that they cannot be classified, while there is a certain room in boundless space allowed for these substances, and the play of their several qualities. The wisdom of God is specially seen in the adjustment of the several material substances with their properties to each other. Not that there may not be wisdom exhibited in the formation of each separate substance considered in itself, and in the properties, more especially the co-existence of the properties, with which it is endowed. Astronomers have asserted that there is a wonderful beauty discoverable in the circumstance that the law of gravitation varies inversely according to the square of the distance ; and it is certain that if it had varied according to any other rule, the same purposes could not have been served by it in the actual mundane system. There is manifestly a wisdom shown in the nature and properties of the elementary substances, some of them being, at the common temperature of the earth, gaseous and singularly pervading and permeating, others being fluid and easily moved, and the common metals being as useful, in consequence of their solidity and coherence, as the gases are in virtue of their elasticity and mobility. But admitting all this, we are still inclined to think that it is chiefly in the adaptation of these substances with their properties to each other that we are to discover the presence and the wisdom of God.

We may discover the wisdom of the Disposer of all things in the adjustment of nature in respect of four classes of relations. There is the relation of bodies in respect (1.) of their PROPERTIES, (2.) of their QUANTITY, (3.) of SPACE, and (4.) of TIME. It may be interesting and instructive to contemplate some examples of each of these classes. Since the relations here referred to belong to various classes, we prefer the words adjustment or adaptation to collocation or disposition, (the words employed by Dr. Chalmers,) in so far as the latter direct our attention merely to that class which originates in the relations of space.* In the illustrations which follow, we have a double object in view ; the one to show that there are such adjustments in nature ; and the other, and an ulterior one, to unfold the processes by which general laws are produced.

FIRST, THERE IS THE ADJUSTMENT OF BODIES IN RESPECT OF THEIR PROPERTIES. This is the basis of all the other adjustments.

Bodies have a power of uniting in chemical and mechanical combination, and, again, a susceptibility of separation. They have also magnetic or diamagnetic powers, electric attractions and repulsions, and affections or actions in reference to the absorption, reflexion, and refraction of light, and the radiation and conduction of heat. Each body has in these respects its own properties in reference to other bodies. Nature is sustained by their harmonious adaptations. But in order to their operation, the bodies must have a relation to suit the action of their properties. "The world," says Faraday, "with its ponderable constituents, dead and living, is made up of natural elements endowed with nicely balanced affections, attractions, or forces. Elements the most diverse, of tendencies the most opposed, of powers the most varied; some so inert, that to a casual observer, they would seem to count for nothing in the grand resultant of forces; some, on the other hand, endowed with qualities so violent, that they would seem to threaten the stability of creation; yet, when scrutinized more narrowly, and examined with relation to the parts they are destined to fulfil, are found to be accordant with one great scheme of harmonious adaptation. The powers of not one element could be modified without destroying at once the balance of harmonies, and involving in one ruin the economy of the world."*

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* Mill talks of the aptly selected phrase of Dr. Chalmers, and has made a profitable use of the principle. We are better pleased with the principle than with the phrase employed to express it. See Mill's Logic, B. iii. c. xii. § 2.

Every one knows how needful the atmosphere is for the sustaining of animal and vegetable life. When air is inhaled by a living being, its oxygen unites with the carbon of the blood to produce carbonic acid; and the combination being a kind of combustion, is one source of the heat necessary to the preservation of the frame. But for the skilful composition of the atmosphere, and the greater disposition of oxygen to unite with carbon than with nitrogen, and the production of heat by the chemical combination of carbon and oxygen, it is evident that animation could not be sustained. It appears that a slight change in the composition of the atmosphere, or even the chemical instead of the mechanical combination of its two elements, would render it no longer capable of accomplishing these ends. And it is by a most skilfully arranged process that the atmosphere, amid the changes which it undergoes in fulfilling its offices, is still enabled to retain its purity. The germination of plants, and the respiration of animals, are constantly active in producing carbonic acid, and in setting nitrogen free. But these in excess would give the air a deadly tendency, and this is prevented by a beautiful provision, whereby the carbon of the carbonic acid is absorbed by plants, as being necessary for their sustenance, and in the absorption the oxygen is set free to join the superfluous nitrogen liberated by the other processes. The animal and vegetable kingdoms are thus made to balance and sustain each other, according to a general law; but this, be it observed, by means of the most skilfully arranged adjustment of the properties of bodies to each other.

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* Lectures on Non-Metallic Elements, pp. 290, 291.

The different powers which bodies have of absorbing and radiating heat also furnish illustrations of the skilful adjustments with which nature abounds. The grass and foliage absorb heat in the summer season during the day, and again radiate it into the clear atmosphere at night, till the plants are so reduced in temperature as to congeal the moisture floating in the air into the dew necessary to refresh them. Every separate plant has its peculiar power in this respect, and by means of the colour of its leaves keeps the measure of heat, and seeks the measure of dew needful to its wellbeing. How curious, too, that circuit according to which the earth receives heat from the beams of the sun while it is above the horizon, again to give out, when the sun has set, that heat to the air, whose temperature is thus equalized! There is a singular counterpart process by which moisture is evaporated into the air by the heat during the day, and again given back to the earth at night, fulfilling important functions in both these positions.

Such circuits as these abound in the works of God, and indicate a nice and constantly sustained adjustment. There is such a rotation in that system according to which rude matter is first taken into vegetable composition, then enters the animal frame as food, and in the end returns to the ground to restore its proper composition. Another equally beautiful circle is described by those processes in which moisture is evaporated from the land and sea, refreshes the air above, and thence descends upon the ground to revive its life, and to gush out in streams; the waters of which, after serving many bountiful purposes, again find their way back to the ocean. There is doubtless a similar balancing in the method by which the ocean is kept in a healthy state, suited to the organisms which live in it. Aquavivaria have been formed in which any pollution produced by plants has been counteracted by the introduction of certain molluscs, and the water maintained in purity for years. This artificial process seems to be founded upon, and to imply a natural balance of vegetable and animal organisms in the great ocean. Nor should it be forgotten that meteorology promises to be exalted into a science by the late discoveries, in regard to the "wind returning according to his circuits."

Now, all these balanced and balancing processes necessarily involve the most skilful adjustments of the properties of air, earth, and water, and of organic and animal life the one to the other.

SECONDLY, THERE IS THE ADJUSTMENT OF BODIES IN RESPECT TO QUANTITY.

We have just been noticing how needful it is that the atmosphere should keep its present composition. That composition is approximately as follows, in tons:—

Nitrogen,	3,994,592,925,000,000
Oxygen,	1,233,010,020,000,000
Carbonic Acid,	5,287,305,000,000
Aqueous Vapour,	54,459,750,000,000
	5,287,350,000,000,000

The four elements of the atmosphere—oxygen, nitrogen, carbon, and hydrogen—are also the essential elements of all vegetable and animal substances; and the two, the atmosphere above and organized substances on the earth, being thus to a great extent the same in their composition, are made to sustain each other's functions. For the respiration of human beings, one thousand millions of pounds of oxygen are daily required, and four times this quantity are necessary for all the functions of nature, including the respiration of man and animals, combustion, fermentation, and decay. The very statement is sufficient to show how admirable the adjustment of the relative mass and the total mass of these separate elements must be, in order to keep in motion the mechanism of nature. An atmosphere of a different composition, or liable to material changes in respect of any of its component parts, would have been utterly unfitted to support either animal or vegetable existence.

Every one knows how powerful an influence the ocean exercises upon the temperature of our globe. A change in the quantity of its waters, or in their distribution, might speedily extinguish both the flora and fauna of the earth. It has been shown, that, in order to the existence of organic beings, there must be the most skilful adjustment between their structure and habits on the one hand, and the distribution of land and water on the other. An increase or diminution to a considerable extent of the bulk of the waters of the ocean, and consequently of their equalizing influence, would so affect the temperature as to render it doubtful if any of the existing species of plants and animals could survive.

The mass of our planet, with its power of gravity, is in admirable adaptation to the plants which grow upon its surface, and the living beings that people it. Were our earth much larger or much less than it is, the force with which it attracted bodies at its surface would be so different, that the greater number of the plants would die, and the animals which did not become extinct would lead a burdensome existence. It seems that plants pump up, by means of some internal force, the sap which is needful for their sustenance. It requires no little force thus to raise the sap till it reaches every branch and leaf of the living tree. An experiment has been tried with a vine at the bleeding season. A branch of a growing plant was amputated, and a glass tube was placed upon the stump, and the sap was pushed to no less a height than twenty-one feet in the tube. Now, were the earth heavier than it is, and consequently the power of gravity increased, the plant could not with its present organization draw up the necessary moisture; and on the other hand, were the force of gravity lessened, the sap would rise so rapidly as to derange all the functions of the plant. The author from whom we have taken this illustration also supplies us with another in the flowers that hang their heads, in the structure of which it is arranged that the pistils are longer than the stamens; and thus the dust needful for the fertility of the flower is enabled to fall from the extremity of the stamens upon the extremity of the pistil. "An earth greater or smaller, denser or rarer, than the one on which we live, would require a change in the structure and strength of the footstalks of all the little flowers that hang their heads under our hedges. There is something curious in thus considering the whole mass from pole to pole, and from circumference to centre, as employed in keeping a snow-drop in the position most suited to the promotion of its vegetable health."*

We find, too, that the size of the earth bears an admirable relation to the muscular strength of man and animals. Were the earth increased or lessened in its mass, the greatest inconvenience would follow. Were our planet, for instance, as large as Jupiter, or Saturn, or Neptune, motion would be oppressive in the extreme to every living being. The hare would crawl like the sloth ; the eagle's flight would be less extended than that of our domestic animals ; and man, as if moving under a heavy burden, would become exhausted, and fall down to the ground upon the least exertion. Nor is it to be forgotten that in such a case the air would become so dense that no animal could breathe it, and press so heavily that it is doubtful if any animal could sustain the weight. On the other hand, were the earth as small as Mercury or the Moon, the animal would be exposed to opposite inconveniences : all our motions would be unstable and uncertain, like that of a person in a state of intoxication ; every blow directed against us would prostrate us to the ground, while the air would become so thin as to be incapable of supporting animal life. In the one state of things, man would be like a captive loaded with chains, and in the other, like a person dizzy and staggering through feverishness and loss of blood.

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* Whewell's Astronomy and Physics, p. 48.

THIRDLY, THERE IS THE ADJUSTMENT OF BODIES WITH THEIR PROPERTIES IN RESPECT OF SPACE.

These skilful collocations abound on the earth : as in the position of the organs in the animal and vegetable frames, so exactly adapted to their functions ; and in the distribution of plants and animals over the surface of the globe, so nicely accordant with the situation and climate. Nature exhibits no such anomalies as an eye placed in the foot, or toes growing on the head, as a camel produced in the arctic and a rein-deer in the torrid regions. But the adaptations of this description may be seen most distinctly in the heavenly bodies.

We can conceive the properties of matter to be as they are, and yet the result only a jumble of incongruities, because the bodies happened to be too near each other, or at too great a distance. If the moon, for instance, had been much nearer the earth than it is, the tides of the ocean would have run so high that navigation must have been all but impossible. The planetary system would never have moved, or would long ago have gone to wreck, if, along with the present laws, there had not also been a skilful collocation of the various bodies. The profound mind of Newton thought it inexplicable by natural causes, and to be ascribed to the counsel and contrivance of a voluntary agent, that the body placed in the centre of the system should have been the only one qualified to give to all the rest the light and heat without which their organisms would have perished. It is conceivable that all the present bodies might exist in the solar system, and obey the law of gravitation, and yet only confusion be the result. The planets might have been so placed as to be ever clashing with and disturbing each other in their spheres; and the law of gravitation, from its very potency, would be the means of propagating a wider disorder. The conditions needful for the proper working and stability of the planetary system are—first, that almost all the planets move round the sun, in nearly the planes of the sun's equator; secondly, that they all revolve round the sun in the same direction, which is that of the sun's rotation on his axis; thirdly, that they rotate on their axes also in that direction; and, fourthly, that the satellites move round the primaries in the same direction. In all these adjustments we are constrained to observe a prescient Intelligence. We see that such language as that of Pontécoulant is as philosophically incorrect as it is impious and profane, when he talks of "the great law of universal gravitation as probably the only efficient principle of the creation of the physical world as it is of its preservation."* So far from the law of gravitation being a principle of creation, it needs an adjustment made to it as the condition of its beneficial action.

FOURTHLY, THERE IS THE ADJUSTMENT OF BODIES TO EACH OTHER IN RESPECT OF TIME.

Such adaptations are very numerous in the animal economy, where organs appear at the very time at which they are needed. The teeth, which would be useless to the infant, and worse than useless to the infant's mother, appear as soon as they can be of advantage. This illustration suggests another, supplied by that beautiful provision of nature according to which the mother's milk flows at the very period when the wants of her new-born infant require it. "It has been adduced as a striking illustration of the Divine foresight, that the season of the birth of the young of certain animals should be adjusted to the season of the year, and to the period of the food most conducive to its well-being; the preparation for the birth of the animal, and the preparation for the birth of its food, (say the larvæ of insects,) dating from very different points of time."*

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* Quoted in Nichol's Thoughts, p. 85. We may add, that even on the supposition that the planetary system has been formed by the cooling of a rotating mass of sidereal matter, according to the hypothesis of Laplace, we are constrained to discover adaptations in the original composition and properties of the sidereal matter, in its rotation, in the laws of the cooling process, and in the planets, (at least the earth,) being cast off in a state fitting them to support animated existence, &c.

Every one acquainted with the elements of geology is aware that, in the past history of our earth, there must have been numberless such adaptations, in the plants and animals being suited to the particular era, with its temperature and moisture. Whewell has supplied us with an illustration, serving to connect heavenly with terrestrial phenomena, when he demonstrates that there is a connexion between the length of the year and the continued existence of the plants of the earth. The rising of the sap, the formation of the juices, the opening of the leaves and flowers, the ripening of the seed, and the drying and maturing of it for producing a new plant—these processes require a certain period, and no period would suit but the actual year of 365 days—that is, the time which the earth takes to complete its revolution round the sun. We are thus led to discover a singular, and, we believe, divinely ordained, adaptation between two things which have no physical connexion—the seasons of the plants on the one hand, and the seasons of the earth in its orbit on the other.

These four classes of adjustment, compounded in all varieties of ways, furnish those innumerable traces of design which are so abundant in the works of God, and some few of which have been developed by writers on natural theology.† As the most wonderful example of these various adjustments combined, we are inclined to mention the organization of plants and animals. Such organization implies the nicest mutual adjustment of the constituents of the body, in their proper quantity and proportion, all coming and departing at the time required, and in order to the production and development of the form of the body. "Organization," says Cuvier,* "results from a great number of dispositions or arrangements which are conditions of life;" and he adds, "the general motion would be arrested if any of these conditions should be altered, or even upon the arresting of any of the partial motions of which it is composed."

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* Harris.

† There are certain philosophers who are ever talking of the laws of nature, as if they could accomplish all that we see in the earth and heavens without the necessity of calling in any divine skill to arrange them. We have sometimes thought that it might be an appropriate punishment to deal with such persons as Jupiter did with those who complained to him of the way in which he regulated the weather. We would give the philosophers referred to a world of their own, with all the substances of nature, and their properties labelled upon them, and arranged according to human science, much like the articles in a museum or an apothecary's shop. We would place the mineralogist over the metals, the anatomist over the animals, and the botanist over the vegetable substances; we would give the meteorologist charge of the atmosphere and rain, and we would furnish the astronomer with those nebulæ out of which it is supposed that stars are formed, as webs are fashioned out of fleeces of wool. Having called these philosophers

We look upon the words "organization" and "organic life" as general names for a most wonderful adjustment of physical substances for the production of certain ends. It may be all very proper to speak of a principle of life as a brief expression for a general phenomenon. But, as Dr. Carpenter remarks, "the only sense in which the term 'vital principle' can be properly used, is as a convenient and concise expression for the sum total (so to speak) of the powers which are developed by the vital properties or organized structures—these being not yet fully understood, and the conditions of their exercise being but imperfectly known."† Let us not, then, deceive ourselves with the words which we employ, and suppose that life is one indivisible and independent principle; a loose but most unfounded idea, lying at the bottom of that form of pantheism which says, that the universe, being possessed of a principle of life, is God. In referring certain operations to the principle of life, we have not explained them, any more than we have accounted for fire, by referring it to the combustible principle. A true explanation must exhibit to us the mechanical, chemical, electric, and, above all, the vital

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together in cabinet council, we would there commit to them these *principia* of worlds. Taking care to retire to a respectful distance for safety, it might be curious to listen to their disputes with one another; and then, when they had arranged their plans of operation, to find the chemist blown up by his own gases, the mineralogist sinking in the excavations which he had made, the anatomist groaning under disease, the botanist pining for hunger, the weather-regulator deluged with his own rain, and the astronomer driven ten thousand leagues into space by the recalcitration of some refractory planet. We may be sure that these philosophers would be the first to beg of Him who is the Disposer as well as the Creator of all things, to resume the government of his own world.

* Règne Animal, Introduction.

† Manual of Physiology, B. i. c. i. 2.

properties of the parts of the living body, together with the conditions needful to their operation.

ORGANIZATION is a system of arrangements whereby the particles of which the body is composed, acting according to their properties, do, by means of such processes as absorption, assimilation, and exhalation, produce and develop certain forms which continue for a time, and generate other organic life of the same species. ORGANIC LIFE is a generic name for those properties which matter possesses only in its organized state, or that state of peculiar adjustment which is called organization. These vital properties differ as much from the mechanical and chemical, as the mechanical and chemical do from one another. Attempts are being made to discover what these properties are, as possessed by cells, by tissues, by tubes, by nerves, and we find them to be such as that of absorption, of contractility, of irritability. Like all the other properties of matter, they are powers by which one body acts on another, and in order to action there is therefore need of other matter, organized or unorganized. Hence we find that all organized bodies require nourishment, on which the vital properties act in the way of assimilation and absorption. Not only so, but in order to action there must be stimuli, such as light, heat, moisture, and electricity, which are necessary conditions of all vital operation. No vital activity can manifest itself without the concurrence both of the organism and the external agent. "Thus, a seed does not germinate *of itself;* it requires the influence of certain external agencies, namely, warmth, air, and moisture; and it can no more produce a plant without the operation of these, than warmth, air, and moisture could produce it without a germ prepared by a pre-existing organism."*

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* Manual of Physiology, B. i. c. ii. 2d ed. We like the phrase "correlation of the physical forces," employed by Mr. Grove to denote the intimate connexion which there is between the various physical forces, and their power of calling forth each other in determinable measure. We believe, too, that Carpenter and Matteucci have shown that there is a similar correlation between the physical and vital forces. The authors now referred to are quite aware that correlation is not identity, and hence they are careful to explain that they do not look upon the forces as being all the same. But there is language employed by them which seems to imply that one force can be *transmuted* into another—a doctrine which is not supported by anything like valid evidence, and is contrary to the whole analogy of nature, which shows us, amidst constant changes, a constant permanence of

There is a vast number of arrangements needful in order to the germination of the simplest seed, a still greater number in order to the action of the more complicated organs, and a number great beyond all calculation in order to the sustaining of a whole plant or animal. We believe that organism in every case will be found to be the result of arrangements more wonderful than the amazingly skilful collocation of the bodies in the solar system. There is a more delicate adjustment required in order to make our muscles play, or the organisms of plants to fulfil their function, than to make a planet revolve in its orbit. We rejoice in all those experiments which are being made in order to discover the as yet latent machinery of the living power. Every true discovery in this department will tend, we are convinced, to enhance our idea of the riches of the Divine wisdom.

We see then how much truth, as well as how much error, there is in the ancient Platonic idea that the world is an animal —an idea which some of the Germans and Anglo-Germans are seeking to revive. Nature, considered as a whole, resembles an organism much more than a human machine. In mechanical operation it is the same matter performing the same work. But in nature, as in organic life, there is a continual shifting of the agents and elements ; and in the one, as in the other, there is a constant uniformity amid constant change. Like all bodies possessed of life, nature has its times and its seasons. It recruits itself like the plant ; it renews its age like the eagle. The present is the fruit of the past, and bears the seed of the future. "I for my part declare," says Carlyle, "the world to be no machine. I say that it does not go by wheel and pinion, motives, self-interests, checks, and balances."* But if the world is not a machine, just as little is it a tree, a plant, an animal. It cannot be explained by mechanical principles, but just as little can it be explained by vital principles. No doubt it has a wonderful organization, but it has nothing in it corresponding to the vital properties of plants, and still less has it anything like the sensation possessed by the animal creation.

So far as it does resemble the organization of plants, we are the more impressed with the wisdom involved in the multiplied

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substance and property. We say property, for matter possesses other qualities than that of mere force. As to allotropism, see Appendix II.

* Heroes and Hero-Worship, Lect. 5.

contrivances required to sustain its continuous activity. For of all parts of nature, organisms are the most dependent on arrangements which have been made by a higher power. The principle of life is not an uncreated self-acting power, but is the result of constructions made with unparalleled skill; and we feel, in regard to it, that there is no part of nature so dependent on God. There is a similar multiplicity, and to an inconceivably greater extent, in those arrangements by which the world is sustained and made to perform its functions; and we feel as if, besides the power required to support each part of nature, there were a still more wonderful power necessary to uphold it in its agency as a connected whole.

SECT. III.—SPECIAL ADJUSTMENTS REQUIRED IN ORDER TO PRODUCE GENERAL LAWS OR RESULTS.

The material world, we have seen, (Sect. I.,) is constituted of substances capable of affecting each other according to certain defined rules, which it is the office of observation to discover, and these substances produce effects when two or more are adjusted to each other in respect of the rule of their operation. In his infinite wisdom and goodness, God has so arranged these substances that beneficent results follow. (See Sect. II.) Some of these results are of an individual character, and may never occur again in precisely the same form. These will fall to be considered in the succeeding chapter on Providence. Others are of a general character, and may take the form of general laws in the third sense of the term as above explained. It is upon these that we are now to fix our attention. They are the principal means of producing order throughout the visible universe.

Proceeding in a deductive method, we might show that, as two or more substances when adjusted produce an individual effect, so two or more causes adjusted produce a general effect. Caloric coming in contact with the nerves and producing the sensation of heat—this is an instance of a particular effect following an adjustment. A body radiating caloric so placed as to emit its heat upon the bodies of animals in a regular manner—the sun, for instance, on the approach of summer raising the myriads of living insects which were dormant during winter—

this is an example of an adjustment of causes producing a general effect. But it may be more interesting and satisfactory, perhaps, to proceed in an inductive method, and to observe first the general laws or results which abound in every department of nature, and then show how they all proceed from a nice arrangement of causes. The history of science shows that it has made progress after this method, first observing the general laws of phenomena, and from these rising to causes, and the conditions of their operation.

From the very earliest ages mankind felt an interest in observing certain general laws or facts in regard to the motions of the heavenly bodies. The priests of India, the shepherds of Chaldea, and the husbandmen of Egypt, began to notice the more useful or the more startling facts, and handed down their observations by tradition, and otherwise, to succeeding generations. These observed facts grew in number and value with advancing knowledge; and every modern astronomer is amazed at the extent and accuracy of the information amassed at length by the astronomers of the Greek and Alexandrian schools. But while these parties attained to a most extensive knowledge of facts, particular and general, these latter being laws, they were altogether in error as to the causes of the motions which they observed and recorded. Kepler completed this class of inquiries, so far as the planets were concerned, and furnished a generalization as large and correct as could possibly be attained by mere observation. The comprehensive mind of Newton rose above the mere observation of such general phenomena to the discovery of a cause, in a property with which all matter, so far as it comes under our notice, is endowed, and according to which it attracts other matter inversely according to the square of the distance. It was now seen that all those other general facts, still so useful in astronomy, proceeded from this general property of matter, and from the harmonious arrangement of the heavenly bodies, in regard to their bulk and situation, and the direction of their motion. We thus perceive that in the heavenly bodies there are certain general harmonies and beneficent arrangements, such as the alternation of day and night, and the revolution of the seasons, which can be noticed independently of all inquiry into causes; and that the causes, when discovered, are found to consist not in a single property of matter, but also, and more especially, in the skilful dispositions which have been made with that property as one of the constituents.

Another and a cognate example is suggested. The regular motion of the tides must have been observed from the time that men dwelt by the sea-coast, or the first adventurer committed himself to the waters of the ocean ; nor would it be difficult to determine their general periods of ebbing and flowing. But no explanation was given of the observed facts till Newton's discovery, when it was found to result from the law of gravitation, as connected with the size and distance of the moon, the magnitude of the earth, and the fluidity and specific gravity of the waters of the ocean.

Take another illustration. The regular blowing of the trade winds must have been discovered at a very early period of the history of the world. The person who was acquainted with the way in which these winds usually blow was possessed of a general fact. It is only of late years, however, that any attempt has been made to find a cause of this general result, lying, it is supposed, in the motion of the earth round its axis, as connected with the laws of the atmosphere, and the particular distribution of land and water. The air heated at the surface of the earth in the tropical regions rises to a higher level, and flows towards the poles, where it is cooled, and thence flows back to the equator, being modified in its current, however, by the motion of the earth on its axis, by the extent of the ocean in the tropics, and by its relation to the land. The person who observes the general current of the air is in possession of a generalized fact which it is most useful to know ; the inquiry into the causes of that fact conducts us into another field, in which we investigate the properties of air, earth, and water in their reference to each other. In much the same way we find that the Gulf-stream was observed long before any particular cause could be assigned ; and that the periodical rising of the waters of the Nile was known and correctly registered, when there were many disputes as to the circumstances which produce it.

Here it may be of some importance to remark, that natural history has very much, if not altogether, to do with the observation of the general facts or results, proceeding from the skilful adjustments made by the Maker of all things, rather than with causes. In investigating the vegetable and animal kingdoms, the inquirer arranges animals and plants into species and genera by the parts which they have in common; and as he advances he observes other resemblances less obvious, till he rises to the highest possible generalizations. At the same time, it should be remembered that these general facts—the forms and developments of organic bodies, and their general resemblances whereby they are classified—all originate in particular properties of matter, organized and unorganized, and in the skilful arrangements that have been made by the Creator. While the mere student of natural history does not feel that it is his province to inquire into such causes, others will not be prevented from pursuing the investigation this length, and from endeavouring to determine the mechanical, chemical, and organic properties by which life is sustained; and the disclosures, we are persuaded, if not so grand, will in many respects be more wonderful than those which have been revealed in the study of the planetary system.

It appears, then, that in investigating the works of nature, our object may be to refer a given phenomenon to a *general rule, or to refer it to a cause.* These inquiries differ from each other, though they are often confounded. In the one the inquirer is seeking after a class of facts, and in the other, after what produced these facts; in the one he discovers resemblances, in the other he reaches power or property. The latter, if prosecuted sufficiently far, will lead to the discovery of a great First Cause, and the former is ever furnishing new illustrations of the wisdom residing in that Cause.

But this is not the precise end which we have been seeking to reach by means of this induction; we think that we have satisfactorily established two very important truths.

The first is, that the works of God are full of general facts or laws—most of them obvious to all who take the pains to inquire into them, and capable of being discovered independently of any examination of their causes.

The second is, that these general laws are the result of a number of arrangements. The very operation of a cause, we have seen, implies the presence of two or more bodies in a certain relation to each other; but a general fact implies more —it implies an adjustment of the causes with the view of yielding such general results.

These truths are so important that they demand some farther illustration. Conceive a mariner observing, as his vessel sails along a difficult coast, the lighthouses which line it. One, he finds, has a steady white light, another is intermittent, a third flashes once every five or ten seconds, and a fourth is revolving, and shows alternately a red and white light. For his special purposes, the sailor is satisfied when he has observed these appearances of the lighthouses. He sees, for instance, a lighthouse which shows alternately a red and white light every two minutes, and he ascertains, by inspection of a nautical almanac, that it is planted on a certain rock. On all future occasions, the very sight of that same alternating light is sufficient to indicate at what part of the coast he is. But there is a person of an inquiring turn of mind, or a mechanic sailing in the same vessel, and he will not be satisfied with these mere observations. Determined to ascertain the cause of the evident phenomena, he would make inquiries as to the shape and structure of the lighthouse, as to the metal and glass, and the light and machinery employed in it. This man may arrive at farther knowledge than the mariner possesses, and knowledge that may be useful for other purposes.

Now, we have here a picture of the method which the mind commonly pursues in its inquiries into the works of God. It first observes and generalizes its observations, as the mariner watches the lights beaming in the darkness, and groups them into the various lighthouses. But the inquiring spirit will not rest satisfied with this. Even for practical purposes, it finds it useful not only to know the general fact, but also the cause from which it has sprung. And in all speculative inquiries as to the production of any event, it knows that a general rule, while it may be eminently useful, is yet no explanation, and it seeks for those antecedent circumstances which have produced the result, and which will produce it again.

But our object in bringing this distinction under notice is to show that nature abounds in orderly facts and results, which mankind observe, and are enabled in consequence to suit themselves to the world in which they dwell, just as the mariner, by observing the regular flashing of the alternate lights, can ascertain at what part of the coast he is. Our farther, and indeed especial, object is to show that these orderly results all imply a multiplicity of ingenious arrangements, just as in the lighthouse it is implied, that the light be adjusted to the silver that reflects it, or the glass that concentrates it, and so adjusted as to produce these regular or intermittent flashes. There is a double adjustment in the system of lighthouses—the adjustment whereby the light is afforded, and the adjustment whereby there is a result according to rule presented to the mariner. Now, we maintain that nature is full of such adjustments. There is not only the adjustment of properties so as to produce causes, but the adjustment of causes acting independently of each other so as to produce uniform effects.

Another illustration may perhaps set this truth in a still clearer light. The person who observes that the hour-hand of a watch makes a complete revolution twice while the earth revolves in its orbit once, has obtained what is equivalent to a general law of nature ; when he observes that the minute-hand makes twelve revolutions while the hour-hand makes one, he has got what is analogous to a second general law ; and when he notices how the second-hand makes sixty revolutions while the minute-hand makes one, he has arrived at a third general law. As soon as he becomes acquainted with these three general facts, he has all the knowledge required to enable him to make a practical use of the watch. But whoever wishes to know the causes or manner of production must inspect the work within, when he will find that the regular movement of the hands upon the dial is the result of ingeniously contrived machinery. Now, the general laws of nature correspond to these orderly movements of the hands, and a knowledge of them is all that is needful to guide us in the business of life. If the husbandman knows the time of the rising and setting of that timepiece which God has placed in these heavens, he can arrange all his agricultural operations without knowing the cosmical arrangements from which the movements of the seasons proceed, without having it settled whether the earth goes round the sun, or the sun goes round the earth. But if he would become a philosopher, and determine the causes of these to him so beneficent movements, he must ascertain those dispositions of sun and planet by which they are produced.

We can conceive of a world in which there might be the operation of causation, and yet few or no general results. A cause in the same circumstances produces the same effects ; but in the supposed world the same circumstances might not recur, or not recur after any general rule, and thus there would be nothing but confusion, even with a series of uniform sequences. It requires adaptation upon adaptation, the adaptation of substance to substance, and of cause to cause, to produce those regular results in which nature abounds, and which, as we shall proceed to show in the next section, are so suited to the constitution of man.

We see how superficial are the views of those who congratulate themselves in the thought, that they have explained any given phenomenon when they have referred it to a law. We had occasion to remark formerly, that, in ascribing an event to a general law, so far from explaining its production, there is only brought under our notice other objects so far resembling it, and equally with it demanding explanation. But we can now go a step farther, and notice how in this general law there must be a number of adjustments implied, additional to those involved in the production of a single effect. When phenomena, falling out according to a law, are brought before us, we have now to determine not only the adjustments which produce the separate events, but also the adjustments which produce them according to a law. In referring a phenomenon to a law, we are multiplying the wonders of nature, in so far as we are bringing into view not only other phenomena which require to be accounted for, but an order among them requiring also to be explained.*

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* We see, now, the error of all those who never go beyond laws and developments. M. Comte boasts that he has established a positive philosophy, free from all theory, and seems to think that science can never rise beyond general laws. But positive philosophy tells us that there is never a phenomenon without a cause, never a general phenomenon, or class of phenomena, without a general cause; and it is from the adjusted relations of these general causes, that we ascend, by means of the clearest principles of a positive philosophy, to the belief in an Intelligence presiding over the universe. Mr. J. S. Mill acknowledges the existence of causes, but regards them as mere laws of succession, without discovering any potency in the cause to produce its effect. Hence his error in supposing that there can be no such thing as explanation. (See Book iii. chap. xii.) We agree with him in thinking that when we refer a phenomenon to a law, we do not explain it, but when we discover a cause we have found an explanation of its occurrence. True, this cause may also have a cause, but as we trace up causes in this way we come at last to a power, which accounts for all causes and effects. We are glad to find Humboldt declaring, (Cosmos, Vol. iii. p. 7, Otte's translation,) that the highest, though more rarely attained aim of all natural inquiry, is the discovery of *causal connexion.* It is surely to be regretted that one, who has swept as on angel's wings through physical creation, should not have delighted to make reference to the presence and wisdom of the Creator.

There are in nature no other inherent powers than those which reside in the separate substances, and which we call their properties. It appears to us that the creation of the substances, the imparting to them of their properties, and their mutual arrangements, all proceed from the same Divine hand. But though it were admitted, for the sake of argument, that these properties in themselves furnished no indication of a Creator, still we could have abundant evidence of the existence of a designing mind in the adjustment of them, so as to admit of their beneficial operation, and in the ingenious and complex arrangements requisite in order to events falling out in that orderly manner which we call general laws. *So far from general laws being able, as superficial thinkers imagine, to produce the beautiful adaptations which are so numerous in nature, they are themselves the results of nicely balanced and skilful adjustments.* So far from being simple, they are the product of many arrangements; just as the hum which comes from a city, and which may seem a simple sound, is the joint effect of many blended voices; just as the musical note is the effect of numerous vibrations; just as the curious circular atoll-reefs met with in the South Seas are the product of millions of insects. So far from being independent principles, they are dependent on many other principles. They are not agencies, but ends contemplated by Him who adjusted the physical agencies which produced them. As such they become the rules of God's house—the laws of his kingdom; and wherever we see such laws, there we see the certain traces of a Lawgiver.*

We see, too, that general laws have no necessary existence. Properties are permanent in the substance, and can only be destroyed with the destruction of the substance. Causes must act when needful arrangements are provided. But general laws may change with changing circumstances. Without any change of the bodies in the universe, without any change in their properties, there might be a complete change—as by the shifting of the scenery in a theatre—in the general laws or order of nature.

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* If these views are correct, the principle laid down by Dr. Chalmers is not a distinction between the laws of matter and the collocations of matter, but a distinction between the *properties* of matter, and the *adjustments required in order to their action.* We see, farther, that the principle is so extensive in its application, that general laws, in the proper sense of the term, are the result of collocations or adjustments of some kind.

Without creating one new material substance, or destroying any of the existing ones, God may accomplish that change—rather than destruction, to which the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews points, as the precursor of the new heavens and new earth—"As a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed."

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTE (B.)—LAWS OF PHENOMENA, CAUSES OF PHENOMENA, CONDITIONS OF THE OPERATION OF CAUSES.

The views partially exhibited in the text are fitted, if carried out, to furnish, in our apprehension, some assistance in introducing order into a topic which is still somewhat confused—the logic of physical investigation. We must not be tempted to enter far into a subject which we feel ourselves incapacitated to grapple with in all its extent. The few observations which we have to offer may be best delivered in the shape of a brief review of the two learned and philosophical works of Dr. Whewell on the History and Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences.

This author, throughout these works, has made a frequent and profitable use of the distinction between the inquiry into the *laws* of phenomena and the *causes* of phenomena. "Inductive truths are of two kinds—laws of phenomena, and theories of causes. It is necessary to begin in every science with the laws of phenomena, but it is impossible that we should be satisfied to stop short of a theory of causes. In physical astronomy, physical optics, geology, and other sciences, we have instances showing that we can make a great advance in inquiries after the true theories of causes."*

In illustrating this remark, he states, that in "their first attempts men discovered an order which the phenomena follow, rules which they obey; but they did not come in sight of the powers by which these rules are determined—the causes of which this order is the effect. Thus, for example, they found that many of the celestial motions took place, as if the sun and stars were carried round by the revolution of certain celestial spheres; but what causes kept these spheres in constant motion they were never able to explain. In like manner, in modern times, Kepler discovered that the planets describe ellipses before Newton explained why they select this particular course, and describe it in a particular manner. The laws of reflection, refraction, dispersion, and other properties of light, have long been known; the causes of these laws are at present under discussion." "Hence the larger part of our knowledge of nature, at least of the certain portion of it, consists of the knowledge of the laws of phenomena. In astronomy, indeed, besides knowing the rules which guide the appearances, and resolving them into the real motions from which they arise, we can refer these motions to the forces which produce them. In optics, we have become acquainted with a vast number of laws, by which varied and beautiful phenomena are governed; and perhaps we may assume, since the evidence of the undulatory theory has been so fully developed, that we know also the causes of the phenomena. But in a large class of sciences, while we have learned many laws of phenomena, the causes by which these are produced are still unknown or disputed. Are we to ascribe to the operation of a fluid or fluids—and if so, in what manner—the facts of heat, magnetism, electricity, galvanism?—what are the forces by which the elements of chemical compounds are held together?—what are the forces of a higher order, as we cannot help believing, by which the course of vital action in organized bodies is kept up? In these and other cases, we have extensive departments of science, but we are as yet unable to trace the effects to their causes; and our science, so far as it is positive and certain, consists entirely of the laws of phenomena."*

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* Philosophy of Inductive Sciences, 2d edit. vol. ii. Aph. concerning science, 24.

In his work on the History of the Inductive Sciences, Whewell shows how all the sciences have been following the order now pointed out. First, in every science there is a preparatory period, or the prelude of discovery, in which inquirers are busily employed in discovering the laws of phenomena. Then, secondly, there is the period of the discovery itself. Thirdly, there is the period of deduction in which the law or cause is verified, and carried out to the explanation of existing phenomena. Among the earliest discoveries in astronomy may be reckoned the formation of the notion of the year, and the grouping of the heavens into constellations. It was ascertained by the Chaldees that, after a certain period of years, similar sets of eclipses return. The discovery of such laws formed the prelude to the period of Hipparchus. Hipparchus resolved these phenomena into higher laws, of which epicycles and eccentrics were the best expression. Coming down to modern times, we find, first, certain useful observations as a prelude, then the discovery of the laws of Kepler, and a sequel to this discovery in the application of these laws to the planets and moon. The laws of Kepler, and the laws of motion as established by Galileo, were the prelude to the discovery of Newton, which discovery has a train of verification reaching down to the present day. Whewell endeavours to trace the same order in what he calls the secondary mechanical sciences. Thus, in optics we have a period of prelude, during which the laws of phenomena were carefully observed, and as an example, he gives Sir D. Brewster's rule for the polarizing angle of different bodies, that rule being that the index of refraction is the tangent of the angle of polarization. Such laws formed the preparation to the discovery of the undulatory theory, (supposed by Whewell to be the true one, (as established by Young and Fresnel, and now being corrected and verified. In the science of heat, inquirers have in time past been busily employed in collecting laws of phenomena in regard to conduction, radiation, polarization, which it is hoped may speedily issue in the true theory. In chemistry, and the sciences which treat of electricity, magnetism, and galvanism, the object sought is to discover laws of phenomena. As an example, we have the law of definite proportions as developed by Dalton, and which may be regarded as consisting of three parts: that elements combine in definite proportions, that these determining proportions operate reciprocally, and that when between the same elements several combining proportions occur, they are related as multiples. The singular laws detected by Faraday and others in electricity and magnetism seem to have brought us to the very verge of some brilliant discovery in these departments of nature.

Such is the extensive induction of Whewell in reference to the development of scientific inquiry. It furnishes, we conceive, a striking illustration and confirmation of the views advanced in the text. And, if we do not mistake, the views now set forth in these sections serve to give an explanation of the progression which the able historian of philosophy has so well described. We are now in circumstances to apply the distinction of which Whewell makes such profitable use to his own researches, and to furnish, if we mistake not, the causes of those laws of phenomena which he has so skilfully traced in the history of the inductive sciences.

Let us take along with us these three general truths—First, that God has so arranged the universe that general results or facts everywhere fall under our notice ; Secondly, that these general results proceed from causes ; and, Thirdly, that these causes require assorted adjustments as the condition of their operation. Take these three general facts, and apply them to the subject before us, and they will at once explain the course which Inductive Science has run.

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* Vol. II. pp. 95, 96.

(1.) *Nature is full of general facts or phenomena.* Many of these general facts or results are of a very obvious nature, and are intended to be noticed by all who take the trouble of exercising their minds and senses. Thus the alternation of day and night and of the seasons, and the periods of the moon, would be early discovered by all. We can conceive that one of the first efforts of true science would consist in giving precision to these observations ; in determining, for instance, the true length of the year and the lunar month. The more striking phenomena of the heavens, such as eclipses, would then come to be observed, till by degrees, and as society advanced, certain persons would be induced to pursue science for its own sake, and independently altogether of the immediate practical good derived from it, or the fame accruing to those who were able to predict some of the more startling appearances of the heavenly bodies. General observations in regard to the sun and moon's apparent motion in the sidereal heavens would come to be multiplied, and handed down as a precious legacy to future generations. The fertility of mind and the indefatigable perseverance of Kepler conducted at last to the discovery of the laws which bear his name, and these, with the mechanical discoveries of Galileo, enabled Newton to rise to the discovery of the law of gravitation. Now, all along this lengthened line, we have merely the discovery of interesting and instructive general results, till Newton arrives at a cause, in a property inherent, as far as we can see, in all masses of matter. Though it should be discovered that this property is the result of other properties of matter, (as from the mutual repulsion of all particles of matter, combined with the somewhat greater mutual attraction of matter and an all-pervading electric fluid,) still as gravitation is a property of all masses of matter, we are not the less to regard Newton as having ascended to the discovery of a cause.

(2.) It appears, then, that God has so constituted this world, that mankind can observe many interesting laws of great speculative and practical value, though they have no conception whatever of their causes. But still *these general phenomena—being merely particular phenomena resembling each other in certain respects—do all proceed from causes.* We now know, for example, that all those general laws of the movements of the heavenly bodies which were observed with such interest by the ancient astronomers, and which are still watched by the husbandman and shepherd, proceed from the property of gravitation, as connected with the collocation of the bodies which attract each other. These laws in themselves were fitted to excite an intense interest in the human mind, and the observation of them served most important practical purposes; and they were so obvious, at least some of them, that the mind could arrive at a knowledge of them without having so much as a glimpse of their cause. But still there was an anxiety all along to discover the cause of which they were the effects ; and the discovery of Newton is hailed as the greatest contribution ever made to astronomy. And let it be observed, that it was the discovery of these laws of phenomena that enabled Newton to find out the cause of the phenomena. This is easily explained. The cause is so adjusted as to produce these general phenomena, which become in consequence the most expressive indication of the nature of that cause.

While the learned author whose works we are reviewing has seen very clearly the distinction between the laws of phenomena and the causes of phenomena, yet he has not observed, or at least he has not pointed out, the connexion which subsists between them. The laws of phenomena proceed from causes, and causes assorted so as to produce these laws, and so they are the most direct and effectual means of enabling us to trace the causes. It was the steady contemplation of the laws of phenomena discovered by Kepler which furnished Newton with the data on which he proceeded, in forming a correct theory of the causes of the visible motions of the planetary bodies. We thus perceive, that as the discovery of the laws of phenomena generally precedes the discovery of causes, so the former is the most certain means of reaching the latter. We can account in this manner for the nature of that progress which Whewell has traced so beautifully in the development of science.

(3.) In doing so, however, we must take into account the third general truth which we have enunciated—*that causes require adjustments as the condition of their operation.* There is something more in the true cause of the heavenly motions than the mere property of gravitation ; there are adjusted relations of space and time. These had to be taken into account by Newton before he could establish his doctrine of universal gravitation. The laws of Kepler related to the adjustments of time and space—they related to the orbit of the planets, and the times of the planets' revolutions ; and were thus the means of enabling the comprehensive mind of Newton to grasp the whole complex cause. It is a curious circumstance, and a proof of the necessity of taking such relations into account, that an erroneous calculation of the relative distance of the earth's surface and of the moon from the earth's centre led Newton for a time to lay aside his theory. The discovery of Newton was made through a steady apprehension of the distances of the heavenly bodies, the times of their revolutions, and the laws of force and motion, being the conditions necessary for the operation of the cause.

By not taking into view the general truth now referred to, Whewell, as it appears to us, has fallen into a grievous mistake. He speaks of the philosopher's ideas of space and time as giving coherency to the phenomena which he observes, and everywhere talks of these ideas superinducing upon nature something which does not actually exist. (See Aph. XI.) Now, the correct expression seems to us rather to be, that those who possess adequate and steady conceptions of space and time are enabled to discover the relations of space and time which are to be found in the works of nature, and which are so necessary to their operation. The mind, as Whewell shows, must be active in making scientific discoveries, or even in apprehending scientific facts ; but its activity consists, not in adding to phenomena relations which do not exist in nature, but in apprehending, by means of the active intellectual faculties, the relations which are needful in order to the beneficial action of the works of God.

It is because the relations of space and time are involved as conditions in the operation of universal gravitation, that the science which has to do with space and time (we mean the mathematics) furnishes such aid in astronomy. Hence, too, the necessity on the part of all who would successfully prosecute astronomy, of clear ideas of space and time. This does not arise, as Whewell seems to think, from the circumstance of these ideas being needful to superinduce upon the facts which astronomy presents something which has no reality, but from the more obvious circumstance that these ideas are necessary in order to enable us to discover the relations that actually exist.

On the supposition that the undulatory theory of light is the correct one, we may observe the same three general truths, and by them explain the progress made in this department of science. These undulations being regular in a homogeneous ether, must produce certain general results which were noticed in the first stages of inquiry; and these general phenomena at length conducted Young and Fresnel to the establishment (it is supposed) of the undulatory theory. They did so, because they resulted from the operation of the cause to the discovery of which they thus led. And let it be observed, that this cause implies the adjustment of the undulations and the ethereal fluid in which they take place. Some move faster than others; and the more rapid, in overtaking the others, produce, it is supposed, what are called *interferences.* Then these vibrations, in order to produce the actual results, must be transverse vibrations. All these are skilful adjustments, without which the end could not be accomplished—the production of vision. Hence the need of clear and comprehensive ideas of force and motion and place on the part of all who would prosecute this science; and this, not as Whewell would say, because every discovery consists in the application of a correlative idea to existing facts, but because the facts have a peculiar relation in respect of space and time and force, which it is the business of the observer to display, and of the philosopher to resolve into its cause.

In the sciences not mechanical, such as chemistry, laws of phenomena must all proceed from a similar adjustment of substances to each other in regard to their quantity and their properties. It is always to be borne in mind, that the laws which come under our notice in chemistry are those of chemical affinity, and not of mechanical force. All existing compound bodies result from the adjustment of the particles of matter, in respect of their rules of elective affinity. As all actual phenomena are complex, the resolution of them into their elements requires steady apprehensions of that on which their present nature depends, and in particular on the laws of elective affinity and on quantity, (which is measured by weight;) and this, not because laws of phenomena are ideas superinduced upon facts, but because they are the result of the relations which the facts bear one to another.

SECT. IV.—WISDOM DISPLAYED IN THE PREVALENCE OF GENERAL LAWS AND OBSERVABLE ORDER IN THE WORLD.

All the material objects on our earth seem to be composed of rather more than sixty elements. We think that we can discover the wisdom of God in creating, as the elements out of which existing things are formed, substances sufficiently numerous to produce variety, but not so numerous as to create confusion. The human mind is so formed, that it delights in mingled sameness and diversity; and we are furnished with as much variety as the finite capacity of man can observe, in the unnumbered compounds formed out of the simple ingredients; while, on the other hand, the mind is kept from bewilderment by its being enabled constantly to fall back upon comparatively few principles. In the actually existing forms and colours, the diversified properties and incessant changes of the physical world, we have sufficient variety and novelty to interest the curiosity and delight the imagination; we have flowers of every shape and hue, lovely landscapes of every diversified extent and character, and the expressions of beauty in the human form and countenance; while the understanding feels itself secure, and science has a solid resting-place, in falling back on the few elements to which all things can be reduced.

But it is in that ordinance of heaven, according to which law universally prevails, that we discover most clearly the wisdom of God. In particular, we may observe how admirably such a system is adapted to the nature and constitution of the human mind.

Many piously disposed minds, we are aware, are inclined to be jealous of the discovery of law in the universe. Some of the ancient philosophers of Greece were suspected of Atheism and subjected to persecution, because they pointed out the natural causes of phenomena which the vulgar ascribed to special miracle. There is still a lingering suspicion among many, of the extent to which modern research is pushing the reign of law. They feel as if science was setting itself up as a rival to Deity, and attempting to drive God from one part of his dominions after another, in much the same way as Rome extended itself in ancient times, making conquest upon conquest, always under a plausible pretext, and in the hope that at last it might reign alone. It will serve to remove this mistake, (for such we reckon it,) if it can be shown that there is admirable wisdom displayed by the Divine Being in the selection of this particular mode of government.

The wisdom of this method appears in its exact adaptation to the nature of man. Had man been differently constituted, it is conceivable that a different system might have been preferable. It is possible, or probable, that somewhere in the universe there may be a world in which there is no second cause of the events that are occurring—no other cause but the direct exercise of God's will. But if there be such a state of things, as seems very possible, all the creatures above those governed by mere instinct —in short, all intelligent being—must be differently constituted from man, and acquire knowledge by some immediate insight into the Divine mind or purposes. In such a world, man with his present nature would feel himself to be a stranger, a wanderer, and an outcast, unsuited to all around, and all around unsuited to him.

Nearly all deep thinkers acknowledge that there is an inward principle which leads us on the discovery of an effect, to rise up to a belief in a cause, and upon observing the cause, to anticipate the effect; and that this principle is not the result of experience, but rather the foundation on which we proceed in gathering experience. Now, external nature is in exact conformity to this inward principle. What we are led by our intuitions to expect, we find to be actually realized. Our inward belief is ever met by a corresponding connexion in the actual succession of events. Without such a correspondence, man would wander for ever in a bewildering maze, finding nothing but contradictions, and at war with the whole of creation.*

But there is a farther adaptation between the external and internal world. It is conceivable that every event might have fallen out according to the relation between cause and effect, without there being any sequences in nature coming under human inspection. The causes of the effects in nature might all have been supernatural, and consisted in the immediate volitions of Deity, or of angelic beings, or in physical powers beyond the reach of man's observation. In such a system, there would have been nothing contrary to man's intuitive principles, just as we hold that there is nothing inconsistent with them in the miracles recorded in Scripture. But as man is at present constituted, he could not in such a state of things have derived any knowledge from experience. The past could have thrown no light upon the future, nor could any steps have been taken for the attainment of good or the prevention of evil.

Man is placed in a system of things, in which all the changes produced in the objects that surround him occur according to a relation constituted among the substances changed. In using this language, we mean to announce something more than the axiom, that every effect has a cause. To this principle there can be no exceptions, at any time or place. The miraculous interpositions recorded in Scripture are not inconsistent with this fundamental axiom, for they are the effects of the will of God as the cause. But in speaking of the visible universe, as all connected together by the relation of cause and effect, we enunciate the farther truth, that every existing phenomenon (the miracles of Scripture being always regarded as exceptions, and they serve their purpose just because they are exceptions) has a cause in some other phenomenon or created object.* God has so constituted this world, that every effect has not only a primary cause in the will of God, but an instrumental cause in the substances which God has created and placed in the same mundane system. Now, all this is in admirable adaptation to the nature of man, who attains to knowledge and power by means of the circumstance, that all things are happening according to an order which he can observe, and of which he can take advantage in all his operations.

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* See some remarks on the INTERNAL PRINCIPLE OF CAUSATION, in Appendix IV.

The adaptation of material nature to man's constitution is thus seen, first, in the circumstance that every event has a cause; and, secondly, in the circumstance that it has a natural cause. But there is a third class of adaptations which strike the mind still more impressively. We refer to those exhibited by the general laws or results which come under our notice everywhere, and which are the production, as we have seen, of causes ingeniously adjusted to each other. The agents of nature are so arranged into a system, or rather a system of systems, that events fall out in an orderly manner. The seasons roll on, for instance, and with them their several characteristics—the bud and promise of spring, the full-blown beauty of summer, and the fruitful riches of autumn, all terminating in the gloomy night of winter, in which nature rests and prepares for a new exertion—and this, not because the phenomena proceed from one isolated cause, but because a vast variety of independent agents are made to conspire for the production of one end. These general laws are the grand means of enabling us to anticipate the future, and to take steps for the accomplishment of our purposes.

Had there been no common points of resemblance between the innumerable objects met with in nature, man must have continued in a state of helpless ignorance. He would have felt in much the same way as when carried into a large wareroom where all the articles are in confusion, or rather where every article is incapable, even by the greatest pains, of being arranged with any other. But we find nature, instead, full of an order which can be observed by man. By means of common points of resemblance, the objects can be grouped and classified for the assistance of the memory and for the practical purposes of experience. Here, again, let us remark the wonderful adaptation of mind to matter. The human mind is so constituted as to be able and disposed to observe relations, and especially resemblances, and so to group objects into classes by means of these relations. There is thus, on the one hand, a tendency in the human mind to arrange and classify; and, on the other hand, the objects around us have multiplied relations one towards another, affording befitting exercise for the intellectual faculty, and enabling it to dispose all individual substances into a series of groups, and to connect all nature in one sublime system. It may be interesting to trace this ordination and subordination, and to observe how it prevails most in those natural objects with which man is most intimately connected, and on which his welfare specially depends.

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* The peculiarity of a miracle is, that it has not a cause in the natural powers operating in the Cosmos. Though not falling in with the "uniformity of nature," —which is by no means an ultimate principle, or a principle without exception, (there is, *e.g.*, the creation of new species of plants and animals as revealed by geology)—it is by no means inconsistent with what is truly the ultimate and intuitive principle, that "every effect has a cause:" for it has an adequate cause in the power of God.

We set out with the remark, that ORDER proceeds from INTELLIGENCE and is suited to INTELLIGENCE. The illustrations of this principle might, if we do not mistake, furnish an argument in favour of the existence of a Supreme Intelligence, of a different kind from that derived from the mere adaptation of parts.

We enter a well-arranged shop, and we find all the articles in order. It is a stationer's shop, and we find the paper assorted in slips, each containing a certain number of sheets, and these again into bundles, each containing a known quantity of slips. It is an illustration of order in respect of NUMBER. In the same shop there are illustrations of order in respect of FORM or FIGURE; for the sheets placed together have all the same shape. Or, we enter a tea or a sugar warehouse, and find all the chests or barrels containing the same quantity of the article by weight or measure. Or, we inspect a skilfully cultivated farm, and find all the ridges of the same width and of a similar slope. In the regular methods prescribed to his workmen by every intelligent master, we observe an order in respect of TIME. These are illustrations of ORDER which cannot proceed from chance or caprice, but *from* intelligence. And as they proceed from intelligence, they are also suited *to* intelligence. Without such an order man would become bewildered in very proportion to the profusion of his possessions.

There are examples of a still higher order in the works of man. Man has not only a love of order for the sake of its utility—he has also, explain it as we please, a love of order for the sake of its beauty. We enter an elegant city, and we examine its public buildings, say the hall in which its citizens are wont to assemble, and we find every part accommodated to the classic forms which have been handed down from ancient Greece. We inspect the temple in which the inhabitants meet for the worship of God, and we find its lines following a sweeping curve, and reaching at last a vertex which seems to point to heaven, while the interior looks like a shaded avenue of trees. We wander over the grounds allotted to the recreation of the inhabitants, and we find them adorned with plants of divers forms and colours, arranged on a plan which furnishes uniformity with variety. Here, again, we recognise order produced by intelligence and for the gratification of intelligence. We are now to inquire, whether there may not be a similar ORDER in respect of such qualities as NUMBER, FORM, TIME, and COLOUR, in the works of nature, proceeding from CREATIVE and adapted to CREATED INTELLIGENCE.

The mind has an aptitude and an inclination to observe relations among objects in respect of such qualities as these; it looks out for them, and it is delighted when it discovers them. The mental faculty and tendency we are now to shew are met and gratified in every department of the earth and heavens. There is not a more striking correspondence between the eye and the light than there is between the intellectual capacity and appetency, and the groupings of physical nature.

(1.) To begin with CHEMISTRY, the science which treats of the composition of bodies. Dalton's discovery of the law of definite proportions shows that there is a law of numbers at the very basis of this science; for all compositions and decompositions take place according to numerical rule. The elements of nature will not combine according as we may choose to mix them, but only in certain definite proportions; and where between the same elements several combining proportions occur, they are related as multiples. In order to composition we must have the elements in their fixed proportions, and as the result of decomposition we come back to elements in a numerical relation. In the same science, we have a numerical law in the proportions according to volumes in which gases combine.

(2.) Turning to MINERALOGY, we find the commencement of those wondrous forms which play so important a part in the organic kingdoms. A careless observer is apt to conclude that no regularity exists in the shapes of the solid bodies which fall under our notice in nature. But on a more careful inspection, it will be found that the greater number of bodies which have in themselves no regular external form, present, when broken up, distinct traces of a regular or crystalline texture, and the impression is left on the mind that the entire mass is an aggregate of an infinity of small crystals banded together. It is certain that the greater number of minerals do assume certain geometric forms with fixed angles and proportions, and that the same mineral in the same circumstances always assumes the same crystalline form. These crystals are bounded by plane faces; and where the crystal is fully formed, every face or surface has opposed to it a parallel face or surface. The number of regular forms which crystals may assume is very great, but these have been reduced to six primitive forms, which have all their defined angles and prescribed number of sides.

(3.) Turning now to PHYSICS and ASTRONOMY, we find that the science of Acoustics is founded on the perceived relation between sound and number. The science of Optics is expressed in laws relating to angles and numbers. The angle of reflection is found to be equal to the angle of incidence; and we have numerical tables setting forth the powers of refraction. The law of gravitation itself is a law of numbers. As Sir John Herschel has remarked, "the law of gravitation, the most universal truth at which human reason has yet arrived, expresses not merely the general fact of the mutual attraction of all matter, not merely the vague statement that its influence decreases as the distance increases, but the exact numerical rate at which that decrease takes place." The bodies submitted to this law of numbers are so arranged as to produce laws of form; they have a particular spheroidal shape, and move in elliptic curves. The three famous laws of Kepler, which led directly to the Newtonian discovery, are laws of form or number. These laws are, that the orbits of the planets are elliptical, that the areas described by lines drawn from the sun to the planet are proportional to the times employed in the motion, and that the squares of the periodic times are as the cubes of the distances. It is because of the constant presentation of regular curves and precise numbers in the shapes and motions of the heavenly bodies, that the science which deals with forms and numbers, that is, the Mathematics, admits of such universal application to Astronomy. It is from the same cause that we find geometrical symmetry and arithmetical proportions casting up in all physical investigation. Forms and numbers have given to human science all its success and astonishing accuracy, and they have done so because of their universal prevalence in nature. "It is a character," says Herschel, "of all the higher laws of nature to assume the form of a precise quantitative statement." "In all that is subject to motion and change in space," says Humboldt, "*mean numerical values* are the ultimate object—they are indeed the expression of physical laws, they show us the constant amid change, the stable amid the flow of phenomena. The advance of our modern physical science is especially characterized by the attainment and progressive rectification and mean values of certain quantities by the processes of weighing and measuring. The only remaining and wide diffused hieroglyphics of our present writing—*numbers*—reappear, as once in the Italian school, but now in a more extended sense, as powers of Cosmos."*

All this is intended to assist the eye and mind of man, and enable him to recognise and use to advantage the works of God. It is confirmatory of these views, to find, that as we pass from the lower inorganic to the higher inorganic—such as crystals, jewels, and metals, planets, satellites, and suns—and when we rise from the inorganic to the organic, we find the numerical and symmetrical order becoming more prevalent and obvious, and apparently for the purpose of enabling us to investigate and group these more important departments of nature.

Every person must have observed how often certain numbers, such as three, five, seven, and ten, occur and recur in human enumerations and transactions. Recourse has been had to them in all nations and languages; superstition has declared them to be sacred, and philosophy has represented them as perfect; and this circumstance is sufficient to prove that they are advantageous. The fact that corresponding numbers meet us in the animal and vegetable kingdoms, as we are now to show, is a proof of the skilful adaptation of these departments of nature to the wants and character of mankind.

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* Herschel, Nat. Phil. Art. 116. Humboldt's Cosmos, Part First.

(4.) In VEGETABLE PHYSIOLOGY forms and numbers hold a very important place. "The form of a living body," says Cuvier, "is still more essential to it than its matter." It may be added, that the same form is retained amid a great diversity of functions. Organs similar in shape serve different purposes in different species of plants.

The simple symmetry—that is, with the right and left side alike—is found in minerals, but becomes more frequent among plants and animals. The oblong, or two-and-two-membered symmetry, may be traced extensively among crystals and flowers, as may also the three-membered symmetry, which is one of the characteristics of the vegetable kingdom. The square is a common form in crystals, but does not seem suited to vegetable or animal organization. The pentagonal is to be found, to a limited extent, in the animal kingdom, and is by far the most common among flowers. Plants are divided into three grand classes: the first, acotyledons, without seed-lobe, such as lichens and fungi; secondly, monocotyledons, or one-seed-lobed, to which belong grapes, lilies, and palms; and, thirdly, dicotyledons, or two-seed-lobed, such as common garden plants and trees. In some of the first of these the prevailing number is two, or multiples of two, as may be seen in the number of teeth at the mouth of the capsule of mosses. In the second it is three, or multiples of three, as in the inflorescence of the tulip. In the third it is five, as in the geranium. In the geranium we have counted five branches, five leaf-stalks, five main veins, five sepals, five petals, and multiples of five in the inner organs of the inflorescence.

When a plant has two floral envelopes, the outer is called the calyx, and the inner the corolla. The calyx, or outer whorl of leaves, consists of two or more divisions called sepals, usually green; and the corolla, of two or more divisions called petals, usually of some bright colour. Now, we find that the petals always alternate in the most regular manner with the sepals, and that the number of each row of either is the same. "All deviations from this law," says Lindley, "are either apparent only, in consequence of partial cohesions, or, if real, are due to partial abortions." Again, we find that the stamens, or whorl of organs immediately within the petals, are either equal in number to the petals, and alternate with them, or, if more numerous, commonly some regular multiple of the petals.

This prevalence of order enabled a poet, (Goethe,) with a fine sense of analogy, to observe laws in natural history which had escaped the most rigid scientific investigation. Following out the idea of Goethe in regard to the metamorphosis of plants, we find Schleiden exhibiting to us a typical plant, and tracing all the varied parts of the diversified plants on the earth to two fundamental organs, the STEM and the LEAF.* The STEM enlarging downwards forms the root and the lateral rootlets, and mounting upwards terminates in an upper end, which at last develops into a seed or seed-bud. The normal LEAF branches out into a far greater diversity of forms. In the unfolding plant, there are first the seed-lobes, or cotyledons, then the leaves in the common use of the term, and at length there is the "flower," or "blossom," and in it four different degrees of development may be observed, the sepals, petals, stamens, and pistils, all of which are metamorphosed leaves, or, we would rather say, all of which are after the same general form as the common leaves. For we are not, like some who have advocated the theory, to regard all nature as striving after a model form, and guilty of a failure so far as it falls beneath it; but rather as keeping close to a general form in order to give uniformity to nature, but departing from it on either side in order to furnish variety and adaptation to special ends.

We are convinced that it is possible to reduce a plant, by a more enlarged conception of its form, to a unity—that is, to discover a uniformity through all its organs. There are points of correspondence between the ramification of the stems and the venation of the leaf. We have traced a relation between the distribution of the branches of a tree along the axis, and that of the veins of a leaf along the midribs. Some trees, such as the beech, the elm, the oak, and the greater number of our ornamental lawn shrubs, such as the box, the holly, the Portugal and bay laurels, are branched or feathered from the root, or near the root, and the leaves of all these species have little or no leaf stalk. Other trees, such as the common sycamore, the birch, the horse chestnut, the lime, the pear, the cherry, the apple, have more or less of an unbranched trunk, and the leaves growing on them have a leaf-stalk. Again, the leaves of certain species, such as the sycamore, the lime, the gooseberry, send off a number of main veins from the base, and the leaves of certain other plants, such as the rhododendron and azelea, are whorled round the branch, and in both these sorts of plants branches are found to collect near a point, or to whorl round the axis. The main axis of the laburnum and the broom is commonly subdivided into three main branches, corresponding to the triplet leaves. There is a farther correspondence between the angle at which the branches go off, and the angle at which the veins of the leaf go off. It is obvious at a glance that there is for every particular species a normal angle for the lateral veins of the leaf. Again, if any one carefully observe the skeleton of a tree, as seen between him and a clear sky, he will notice that for every particular species of tree there is a normal angle, (from which, however, there are many departures, caused by winds, friction, and other external causes,) at which the branches go off. And on comparing the two, the angle of venation and the angle of ramification, they will be found to be the same. Several other points of correspondence may be detected between the skeleton of the plant and its leaf, as, for example, between the curve of the branch and that of the vein. Generally the leaf, or rather the leafage, coming off at a given point, may be held as representing a branch, or the whole plant.*

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* Schleiden's Plant, a Biography.

Turning from plants with expanded leaves to those with linear leaves, we have been able to trace a beautiful morphological order in pines and firs. It is interesting to trace the succession of whorls along the axis of the pine; to notice how parts not conical are made to produce a figure conical throughout; how the seed-vessels, as their name (cones) denotes, are made to take the same shape, as do also the very clusters or bunches of stamens. We have observed that the cones are often types of the particular species of tree on which they grow. The cone of the pine, indeed, may furnish an attractive study to the reflecting observer for hours. Looking at the arrangement of the scales, he may follow one set of regular spirals, proceeding from right to left, and another set proceeding from left to right. These, by their intersection, give a series of beautiful rhomboids on the surface of the cone, and if he measure the angles of these figures, he will find them approximately 120° above and below, and 60° at the sides. Turning now to the branches, he will find the scars of the fallen leaves also forming two sets of spirals, and these, by their intersection, also giving a series of regular rhomboids. It is a property of these spirals and rhomboids, that from whatever point we view them they carry on the eye, and show us a regularity of figure, while yet there is no wearisome sameness.*

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* These observations were laid by the author before the botanical Society of Edinburgh in June 1851, (see Trans. Edin. Bot. Soc., vol. iv.,) and before the British Association in 1852, and again in 1854. (See Sect. Reports.) See also Balfour's Class-Book of Botany, P. i. c. ii. § 3.

(5.) Coming now to ANIMAL PHYSIOLOGY, we find that the animal kingdom is distributed by naturalists according to external marks, the radiata having their parts arranged around a common centre, the mollusca being enclosed wholly or partially in a soft envelope, the articulata being jointed, and the vertebrata possessing a spinal column. In regard to vertebrata, the class falling most frequently under human inspection, it is instructive to observe that their subdivisions into fishes, reptiles, birds, and mammals, are made agreeably to visible and tangible characteristics. Conformity of structure, indeed, has been the leading principle of classification in zoology from the time of Aristotle to the present day.

The regular forms in the inorganic world are commonly bounded by straight lines, but as we rise to the organic world, we meet with a more rounded contour, and a more clothed aspect. Professor Mosely has shown, that in certain shells of molluscs, the size of the whorls and distance between the whorls follows a geometrical progression, and that the spiral formed is a logarithmal spiral of which it is a property that it has everywhere the same geometrical curvature, which can be said of no other curve except the circle. In the lower tribes of animals the forms are chiefly globular, but as we ascend in the scale they assume a great elegance of outline. So great is the attention paid to type throughout the animal kingdom, that we find animals, if not with the organs, at least with the form of organs, that are of no use except to keep up the symmetry. There are classes of animals in which forms appear which have an object and significance only in other classes. The blind fish of Kentucky cavern has no use for eyes in the dark waters which it inhabits; but, to preserve its symmetry of figure, it has the rudiments of eyes in the place usually occupied by these organs.

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* The author developed these views before the British Association in September 1854. Each of the sets of spirals on the cone and branch is made up of several members or threads. The number of threads in any given set of spirals is always one or other of the following,—1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34, in which scale every succeeding number is made up by the addition of the two preceding; this holds true of all the coniferæ. The numbers of the threads of the two opposite sets of spirals are always contiguous ones in the above scale; thus, if the number of the one spiral be 5, that of the other must be 3 or 8. The number of threads in the spirals seems to be definite for every species. The number of threads in the two spirals of the branch is often a stage lower than in those of the cone; thus in pines the numbers of the branch are commonly 3 and 5, and in the cone 5 and 8.

It was discovered at an early date that there was a conformity of structure in the fore limbs of vertebrate animals, which are fins in the fish, wings in the bird, fore feet in the reptile and mammal, and arms and hands in man. A parallelism can be traced between the fore and hind limbs of the same species, without regard to the diversity of office to which they may be severally adapted. Thus the normal or typical number of toes is ten, five in each row corresponding to the typical number of the digits. In many animals, indeed, some of these are awanting, but in such cases they will often be found in a kind of undeveloped state. Thus in the horse, the first finger may be detected in a rudimental state in a sort of wart in the leg, the second and fourth in the splint bones, while the foot corresponds to the mid-finger, and the hoof is just the nail of that finger enlarged beyond the normal size.

Professor Owen, correcting and following out a series of previous observations by Geoffroy St. Hilaire, Oken, and others, has shewn to the satisfaction of all anatomists, that the axis of the body of vertebrate animals from the top of the head to the tip of the tail is made of a series of segments; of each of which certain parts "maintain such constancy in their existence, relative position, connexions, and offices, as to enforce the conviction that they are homologous parts both in the constituent series of the same individual skeleton."* The typical segment called a vertebra is composed of a centre, a neural and hæmal spine, and certain processes which may support diverging appendages to be afterwards spoken of. We find these essential parts throughout the whole back-bone. They are, indeed, in some parts of all animals so altered from their typical form, that it is difficult to detect them ; still the skilful anatomist can trace them under all their modifications, and finds it convenient to describe them by the same names. In the tail, we have the processes employed to embrace blood-vessels ; in the body, certain of them are ribs to protect the great vital organs ; in the neck, we do not find ribs, because they would injure the free motion of the organ, but we have the rudiments of ribs. Nay, it is now ascertained that the skull itself is made up of parts which can be arranged in a series of segments in which there may be detected the essential parts of the vertebra.

The morphological significature of the limbs of vertebrate animals has likewise been determined by Professor Owen. We have said that the processes of the vertebra might have diverging appendages. In particular, from the hæmal or lower arch of the vertebra certain appendages are found to proceed. Owen traces them in a rudimental state in certain vertebrae of the animal frame, and after an extensive induction, he comes to the conclusion that the scapula and caracoid form the hæmal arch, and the human hands and arms the diverging appendages of the hæmal arch, belonging to the lowest segment, the occipital segment of the skull. The hind limbs are shewn by a similar process to be costal appendages of a pelvic vertebra. He demonstrates that there are homologous segments appearing in the limbs of fishes, reptiles, birds, mammals, and man, though they have to perform very different functions in each of these tribes of animals. He exhibits to us the pectoral fin of the dugong, the fore limbs of the mole, the wing of the bat, the leg of the horse, and the arm of man, and proves that certain essential parts run through them all, and maintain a unity of plan, even when such different functions have to be performed, as that of diving and swimming, burrowing and running, climbing and flying. It is a curious circumstance, that every segment, and almost every bone present in the human hand and arm, exist also in the fin of

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* Owen on Homologies of Vertebrate Skeleton, p. 81.

the whale, though they do not seem required for the support and movements of that undivided and inflexible paddle.* The whole skeleton, skull, back bone, ribs, and limbs, are thus reduced to a unity in a series of segments repeated in their essential parts, though infinitely diversified to suit the purposes of the member.

Similar homologies are being detected in the invertebrate class of animals. The bodies of crabs and insects are made up of a series of rings with appendages, both of which are formed after a common plan, though modified to suit special purposes. In star fishes and sea urchins, the five-fold division of parts is commonly very obvious. These typical forms appear not only throughout the whole existing series of animals from the highest to the lowest, but throughout the whole geological series, from the earliest to the latest. The typical number of toes may be seen in the footprints of reptiles left on the rocks of very old formations. Buckland tells us that in the "fore-paddle of the plesiosaurus we have all the essential parts of the fore-leg of a quadruped, and even of a human arm; first the scapula, next the humerus, then the radius and ulna succeeded by the bones of the carpus and metacarpus, and these, followed by five fingers, each composed of a continuous series of phalanges. The hind-paddle also offers precisely the same analogies to the leg and foot of the mammalia; the pelvis and femur are succeeded by a tibia and fibula, which articulate with the bones of the tarsus, and metatarsus followed by the numerous phalanges of five long toes."

There seem to run through both the animal and vegetable kingdoms, not one, but two principles; the principle of order, and the principle of special adaptation. That every part of the plant and animal is suited to the functions and sphere of life of the species is a truth admitted by all eminent physiologists; and recent science is placing along side of this another principle, that every organic body, and every member of an organic body, are constructed on a model form, upon a predetermined pattern. These two great and far-reaching truths are not contradictory but coincident; each rests on its separate evidence, and the one equally with the other is fitted to illustrate the Divine prescience. While the special modifications or adaptations are intended to promote the wellbeing of the plant or animal, the homologies and homotypes are meant to make organic nature comprehensible by the intelligent creation.

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* Lecture on Limbs by R. Owen, F.R.S. This original and learned anatomist thinks he has discovered a harmony in the structure of animals such as could not proceed from a mere regard to final causes. We are prepared to admit the truth and importance of this remark, provided it be understood as relating merely to final causes having a reference to the wellbeing of the animal. We can discover a very obvious final cause of these homologies in the circumstance that they enable intelligent beings to arrange and group the works of God. How could the common observer recognise and distinguish the animal races? how could Owen make his discoveries without the help of such a principle? Owen has developed unconsciously a teleology of a higher and more archetypal order than Cuvier.

The prevalence of these archetypal forms gives to nature a particular aspect, by which we easily recognise it, and can at once distinguish between the works of God and the works of man. Nature has not only its peculiar physiology or connexion of structure—it has its peculiar physiognomy or characteristic countenance. Every observer will be prepared to acknowledge at once the truth of two favourite remarks of Humboldt, that every particular region of the earth has its particular aspect, and that the Cosmos, as a whole, has a unity of aspect. "Notwithstanding a certain freedom," says he, "of development of the several parts, the primitive force of organization binds all animal and vegetable forms to fixed and constantly recurring types, determining in every zone the character that peculiarly appertains to it, or the physiognomy of nature." "Nature," says Sir Isaac Newton, "is very consonant and conformable to herself." D. Stewart remarks, that "there is a certain character or style (if I may use the expression) in the operations of Divine wisdom, something which everywhere announces, amidst an infinite variety of detail, an inimitable unity and harmony of design."

It is not difficult in our view to discover the final cause of this numerical and symmetrical order. Nature has first of all weights and measures by which she gives out her materials, and it looks as if God had literally "weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance." Then, she has moulds in which she casts her products in their finished form. By this better "signature" than the fanciful "signature of plants," we are enabled to recognise and arrange the various objects by which we are surrounded, and turn them to their proper uses.

We see what pains God has taken to induce us to become acquainted with and put confidence in his works. If you look at them, you can know them as you know the faces of your friends, by their features and expression. Put them to the test, and they come out as certain steady principles, steadfast as the most faithful of friends.

This order is, no doubt, intended primarily and mainly for practical purposes. Hence it is an order which strikes the senses, and which can be easily observed and remembered. It is also the means by which science is enabled to construct its systems. It is not needful in furthering these ends, that the order should be so very precise as a "minute philosopher" (to use a phrase of Berkely's) would make it. As in modern gardening order is not less attended to, while it is far less visible than it was when every line was straight, every parterre squared, and every tree cut into shape, so in the works of God, the order is not the less beautiful and bountiful because it is not precise. Scientific inquirers do, indeed, complain that there is a difficulty in finding a classification at once simple, correct, and complete, of the objects in the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms. Still, there are numerous facilities furnished for such a classification, in the obvious order which prevails in nature; and any difficulties that may present themselves to the rigid logician, arise mainly, we are convinced, from the circumstance that nature hath constructed her forms chiefly for practical ends; and she will not, in order to suit our modes of reasoning, keep rigidly to a rule, when an anomaly might be more useful to the common observer, or tend more effectually to promote the functions of the animal or plant. We can easily understand how, with an order sufficient for all practical purposes, there should yet be a call to depart from it, to a greater or less extent, to suit the climate and situation, and to promote the comfort of the living being. So far as the objects contemplated in natural philosophy are concerned, there needs no such divergence; and this may be the reason why, when natural history has always somewhat of looseness in its laws, those of such sciences as chemistry and physics are scientifically and mathematically correct.

We can now understand how, in the minds of certain mystic philosophers, a mysterious importance should have been attached to forms and numbers. It was an ancient Pythagorean maxim that numbers are the *principia* of the universe, and that things are but the copies of numbers. We will not enter upon the controversies which, in ancient Greece as well as in modern Europe, have arrayed ingenious speculators into opposing parties, because, as one of the combatants says, "we are unwilling to spin out our awaking thoughts into the phantasms of sleep, making cables of cobwebs."* When such philosophers as Pythagoras and Plato, not to mention the author now quoted, have differed, we are not disposed to fix on the perfect or radical number of the universe. We refer to these discussions, which the superficial mind of modern times is not much inclined, we suspect, to appreciate, for the purpose of bringing out the great truth, that regularity pervades the world. How multiplied the traces which ingenious speculators of the class referred to have discovered! One has shown how the circle or sphere bounds the shapes and paths of the heavenly bodies, and many of the stalks and flowers of plants. Another, jealous for Christianity, has rather delighted to trace the form of the cross in a thousand objects in every clime; while two, three, four, and five-fold, lozenge, and network figures have been detected in every department of nature, and given rise to rival schools. We would not set the advocate of the triangle against the supporter of the circle or quincunx; but we adopt the discoveries of all into our eclectic creed, and would charitably reconcile old feuds between men whose writings now slumber in peace amidst dust in the most inaccessible shelves of our libraries, by just suggesting that all these forms abound in nature, and contribute to its reigning order. Peace be to the ashes of those who supported their cause sometimes with warmth as excessive as their ingenuity! We honour them all for their discoveries, and draw from their learned speculations proofs of a beautifully pervading order in the world, suited to the state and nature of man, and fitted to minister to his delight and increase his knowledge.

The principle which reigns in nature is not the triangular, the pentagonal, or cruciform, nor is it the symmetrical nor the numerical; it is the principle of order, and that towards a given end, the furtherance of knowledge, and, we may add, of enjoyment among the intelligent creation. It exhibits itself under a great many other forms besides those of shape and number. Every one knows that certain colours placed alongside of each other are felt to be in harmony, while certain others, when in juxtaposition, are felt to be discordant. It is now established that when the eye alights on any one colour, it loves to have beside it its complementary colour, that is the colour necessary when taken along with the other to make up the full beam. In the decoration of rooms, in our finer needlework and patterns for the higher style of manufactures, studious attention is now paid to harmony of colours. But there has been all along a similar regard had to it, in the colouring of plants and the plumage of birds. There are supposed to be three primary colours in the sunbeam, yellow, red, and blue, these mixed together give rise to the secondaries, orange, purple, and green, to the tertiaries, citrine, russet, and olive, and indeed to the unnumbered hues to be found in nature and in art. Let us take as illustrations the three secondary colours, and inquire what colours are commonly associated with them in nature. Green composed of yellow and blue harmonizes with red, and the eye delights to see the red flower—as of the rose, and the red fruit—as of the cherry, the thorn, the holly, peeping forth so frequently from the green foliage. Green also harmonizes with russet, and russet is very frequently the colour of the young twigs and leaf stalks, which contrast pleasantly with their leaves. The secondary purple, composed of red and blue, mixed in very varied proportions, seems to be the most common colour on the petals of flowers; and in the centre of the inflorescence, sometimes on the base of the petals, more frequently on the anthers and pollen, we may commonly detect the sister colour, the yellow. Purple also harmonizes with citrine, and these two may often be seen, beside each other, in the inflorescence of grasses, and in decaying vegetation. Orange composed of yellow and red is in harmony with blue, and at times a blue corolla has an orange heart. The same colour also agrees with olive, and certain syngenesian flowers of an orange colour have an olive involucre. In birds, the most common harmony is between black and white; the next, a yellowish red with a darkish blue; while in the more ornamented birds we have various hues of green harmonizing with different hues of red. On all sides of us the eye receives unconscious delight from these sister colours ever appearing together. It is evident that he who made the eye also painted the objects which the eye looks at.*

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* Browne's Garden of Cyrus.

It is this principle of order, if we do not mistake, which gives to nature that unity which reflecting minds have ever been fond of observing. "The highest and most important result of the investigation of physical phenomena," says Humboldt, "is the knowledge of the connexion of the forces of nature, the deep sense of their inward dependence." "That which revealed itself first to the interior sense, as a vague presentiment of the harmony and order of the universe, presents itself to the soul in these times as the fruit of long and anxious observation." "Nature, considered rationally, that is to say, submitted to the process of thought, is a unity in diversity of phenomena blending together all created things, however dissimilar in form and attributes; one great whole (τὸ πᾶν) animated by the breath of life." But we doubt much if this philosopher, after all, has determined either the precise nature of this unity, or the origin of the feeling of it. He seeks for the ground of the unity in a connexion of forces, and talks of reducing the immensity of different phenomena which the Cosmos embraces, to a unity of principle. Man, he acknowledges, may never reach the discovery of this one principle, but it is the point towards which all scientific investigation is represented by him as tending. This unity of nature is, in our view, a unity of order; and this unity of order being all-pervading, reflecting minds in every age have perceived it, and all minds enamoured of nature have felt it. The Greeks embodied their perceptions in the word which they employed to denote visible nature, which they called *Cosmos*, a phrase including both order and ornament; and the Latins in the word *Mundus*, a phrase much less expressive, inasmuch as it does not characterize the former of these elements. The ancient Ionian physiologists sought to explain this unity by referring all things to some one physical element, and delighted to trace the metamorphosis of water or fire, as accounting for the whole phenomena of the universe. Pythagoras and the Italian school sought to trace this unity, in a more mystical but to some extent a more profoundly exact way, to numbers and forms. Speculators in modern times have imagined that investigation will at length disclose some great logical abstraction or physical power as the origin and cause of this unity.* Now this unity, if we do not mistake, is just to be traced to a universal order, and the universal appreciation of it to the way in which this order is pressed upon our notice. All science proceeds upon this order, and genius has ever been employed in unfolding it. Lofty minds, such as those of Plato and Kepler, have at times erred in transferring their own ideas of order to the objective world; but it is not the less true that this order permeates all nature, and that all discoveries have been made by the inquirer setting out in quest of it. But this unity does not spring, as the Ionians thought, from a unity of physical element; nor from the inherent powers of figures and numbers, as the Pythagoreans asserted; nor from a fundamental logical principle, as some modern German metaphysicians seem to think; nor from a unity of physical power to be discovered some time or other, as certain physical philosophers appear to imagine. "The philosopher," says Humboldt, "arrives at last at an intimate persuasion of one indissoluble chain of affinity binding together all nature." The one principle which reigns is a principle of order amidst a vast number of elements, but all brought by it into subordination, and using forms, and numbers, and physical forces, only as its principal instruments, and tying nature, not as an indissoluble chain, but as the string keeps together the bunch of flowers until they wither. It is the same unity as there is in a tastefully laid-out garden, in a skilfully planned building, with this only difference, that in these it is a mere unity formed among previously existing materials, whereas, in the works of God, it is a unity in the original composition as well as in the construction of nature. No doubt this unity of order implies a connexion of forces, but a connexion arranged by an intelligent mind using the forces to effect the contemplated end. This unity carries us up to the Divine unity, of which it is a proof, and the Divine beneficence, of which it is an illustration.

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* The author having long had the idea that harmonious colour would be found in flowers, ventured to give expression to it in a paper read before the Natural History Society of Belfast in May 1853. Dr. Dickie has prosecuted the subject in a more scientific manner, and gave the results to the same Society in October 1853. In September 1854, the two read papers on the subject to the British Association. The author is responsible for the statements in the text

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* Aug. Comte represents the positive philosophy as tending towards representing different observable phenomena as the particular states of a general fact like that of gravitation.—(Phil. Pos. vol. i. p. 5.) Schelling seems to trace this unity to absolute existence developing itself, and Hegel to the unity of contradictories and the identity of being and thought. But this unity is not one of identity but of adaptation, instituted by Him who made matter, and mind to contemplate matter. It proceeds from the correspondence between the powers and aptitudes of the mind and the properties and order of the physical universe. Just as there is an adaptation between the eye and the light that falls on it and the harmonious colours in nature, so there is a correspondence between the observing mind and the world observed by it.

It is because this order of nature has to accomplish these ends—(it is a mean and not an end)—that it is not like the classifications of science—stiff, rigid, and unbending—but easy, yielding, and accommodating, like the manners of the man who is thoroughly polite after the highest mode, and who sometimes performs actions contrary to the rules of the mere formalist, because he acts according to the highest rule of a mind of delicate feeling and tact. The order of nature is a varied order to suit the varied circumstances. It is an order which will not sacrifice the end in a foolish adherence to the mere means. In its seeming irregularities, it may be disregarding a lesser rule, but only to attend to the highest rule, which embraces every other. It is all-comprehensive as the canopy of heaven; but like it too, opens as we become afraid that we are approaching its boundary.

Every eye may notice it; it presents itself in every department of nature. Take up the commonest plant—the furze that grows on the common, the sea-weed that clings to the rocks washed by the ocean, or the fern that springs up in the mountain glen—and you may observe in its structure, in its leaves, or pendicles, a wonderful correspondence of side to side and part to part. Let the eye travel over nature as we walk along the cultivated fields, or the grassy slopes and valleys of our upland countries, or among the thick woods where the winds have strewn the seeds, and bush and tree of every kind spring up, each eager to maintain its place, and to show its separate form and beauty—and we discover an order in every branch, and blade, and leaf, and shade, and colour. Take up a leaf or flower, and examine it with or without the aid which art can furnish, and observe how one edge has the same number of notches upon it as the other edge, and what nice balancings and counterpoises there are, and how nicely the lines and dots and shadings of colour suit each other, and recur each at its proper place, as if all had been done by the most exact measurement, and under the most skilful and tasteful eye. Enter the rich arbour or the cultivated garden, and observe how the flowers have been enlarged and improved by the care which has been taken of them; and in this gayer colour, and that fuller expanse, more flowing drapery, and richer fragrance, mark how God, who rewards us for opening our eyes and looking abroad on his works, holds out a still greater reward to those who, in love to him, or in love to them, take pains with and bestow labour upon them.

Rising higher, we find all leading events in the earth and heavens to run in periods. Plants have their seasons for budding, for growing, for bearing seed and fruit, and their whole existence is for an allotted time. The life of animals and of man himself is a period; and it has its periodic developments of infancy, of youth, of manhood, and old age. The very diseases of the human frame have their periods. The events of history, in respect of politics, civilisation, science, literature, and religion, can be arranged into cycles; and as a whole, exhibit a regular, though a somewhat complex progression. The tides of the ocean, and in many places the currents, flow in periods; and in some countries, the winds blow and the rains fall at certain regular seasons. The variations of magnetism on the earth's surface seem to be periodical. The changes in the condition of the earth have been arranged into geological epochs. The year is a period, and it has its seasons; and there are *magni anni* in the movements of the planets, in the revolutions of the binary and multiple stars, and probably also in the movements of the constellations and groups of the nebular heavens.

But this order, thus so universal, is very diversified. It will not be compressed within the narrow systems which men, founding on a limited experience, are in the way of forming, or suit itself to the rigid forms of human logic. It embraces time, number, space, forms, colours, and force, as elements employed, and it blends these together in unnumbered ways. Sometimes its rule is simple, and at other times of great complexity. It has correspondences, analogies more or less striking, parallelisms and antagonisms. Its colours are suited to its shapes,* and its forms to the position in which they are placed; and with a higher than human art, it weaves its divers-coloured warp and woof into figures of exquisite grace and beauty. It has circles, as well as straight lines, and curves of all variety of sweeps; and in its movements there are turnings and windings as graceful as those of the dance. Its very forces are orderly, being according to the reciprocal of the square of the distance or some other rule, and some of them being polar, or opposite forces in opposite directions. Philosophers and artists have sought to determine the line of beauty, but this attempt has been futile; for there are numberless lines of beauty, and there is a beauty which does not arise from lines at all, but from the vast number of other agents which nature employs for producing its order and accomplishing its beneficent designs. The order of nature is undoubtedly a systematic order; but it is like the waving lines which we admire so much in the works of God and the higher efforts of imitative art—its indescribable variety is an essential part of the system.

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* Dr. Dickie has discovered the following co-ordinated facts in regard to the relation between form and colour in plants.—I. In regular corollæ (polypetalous and gamopetalous) colour is uniformly distributed, whatever be the number of colours

Music is not the only harmony to be found in nature. Poetry derives its power to please from the love of harmony which is so deep in our natures; and that not merely in the ear, for the deaf can enjoy it, but in the very soul. The symbolism of the ancient sages, the parallelisms and antagonisms of the Hebrews and of the East, the nicely mixed long and short syllables of the Greeks and Romans, the correspondence of accents and the definite syllables and metres among the modern nations of Europe—all these are suited to principles in man's nature, and show how diversified poetry may be, and yet be true poetry, awakening an echo in every man's bosom. We like not the rivalry between the various schools—the Eastern school, the Greek school, and the French school, or the Romantic school,

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present. II. Irregularity of corolla is associated with irregular distribution of colour. The odd lobe has the most intense colour when there is only one colour, and, generally, the odd lobe is most varied in colour. III. Different forms of corolla in the same inflorescence often present differences of colour, but all of the same form agree in colour. Thus, in compositæ, where there are two colours, the flowers of the centre have generally one colour of uniform intensity, and those of the circumference agree in colour also. Dr. D. thinks that, in comparing earlier geological epochs with the present, we find the floral organs exhibiting greater richness in size, form, and colour, as we approach the æra when man appears. (Paper Edin. Bot. Soc., in Annals of Nat. His. Dec. 1854.)

the Artistic school, and the Lake school in our own country—for all these schools speak to symphonies in the human soul. But there are harmonies in the works of God infinitely more varied and full, and in still more exquisite adaptation to our nature, than those of poetry. There are symbols employed in the works, as well as by the prophets of God, as when the ant teaches us industry, and the regular periods of the sun and other celestial bodies show us the propriety of method; or when the fertility of the ground reminds us that we should bring forth fruit unto God; and when the fading leaf tells us that we, too, shall soon wither and be blown away. What wonderful analogies and conjunctions and antagonisms, expected and unexpected, does nature disclose in the revolving seasons, in alternating sunshine and shade, light and darkness, in the coincidences of Divine providence, in prosperity and adversity, the hill and valley, the level plain and rugged steep, the storm and calm we meet with in the journey of life! The double, triple, quadruple, and quintuple forms that abound in the works of God, furnish a greater diversity than the dimeters, trimeters, quadrameters, and pentameters of the poets. In providence, as in poetic art, we have the rapid and the slow—we have quick dactyls and long-sounding spondees alternating with each other; we have comedy and tragedy, the laugh of pleasure and the wail of sorrow. Though we do not regard human poetry as merely an imitative art, for it is also a creative art, and creates harmonies of its own, yet it is fulfilling one of its noblest functions when it is observing and copying the harmonies of nature. But the copies ever fall beneath the original; and there are harmonies in the works of God which are beyond the painter's pencil and the poet's pen, falling upon the soul with a more melodious rhythm and a sweeter cadence than the most exquisite music.

And here we have to express our regret, that philosophers have not been able to agree upon a theory of the foundation of the love of the beautiful. Had we been in possession of such an established doctrine, we might have pointed out many congruities between the harmonies of external nature and the internal principle which leads us to delight in the lovely and sublime. But we are unwilling to enter upon disputed metaphysical topics; and we must be content with marking, in a general way, the correspondence between the mental taste and the means of gratifying it. Had there been no such taste, much of the pains bestowed by God upon his works, in their graceful forms and delicate shades of colouring, for instance, would have been lost. Had there been no means of gratifying it, the taste would have been worse than useless; it would have been the source of an exquisite pain—for it would ever have craved, and never been satisfied. In the beautiful correspondence between the two—between the taste so capable of enjoyment, and so susceptible, too, of cultivation and increase, and the beauties in nature around us, which do really satisfy the longings of the heart, deep and large though they be—we discover how much God has multiplied our more refined and elevated pleasures, and what encouragements he hath given us to pursue them. When men follow mere sensual enjoyments, the more eager their pursuit, they become the more incapable of relishing them. It is different with the love of the beautiful, (and also with the love of the good;) the more this taste is exercised, it becomes the stronger, and the more capable of enjoyment. While there are limits to the one, and punitive restraints appointed by God, there seem to be no limits to the other. The taste grows with the growth of our refinement; and the means of gratifying it are large as our globe—nay, to sainted beings, may be wide as a boundless universe.

Let us mark, too, as an additional proof of design, the divinely appointed connexion between the beneficent and the beautiful. God might have so constituted man and the world that the two had been totally different; and the good approved by our conscience might usually or always have been repugnant to our natural tastes and sensibility. We find, instead, that there is a correspondence between them. Not that the two are identical, or even parallel, in every respect. In the human species, the beautiful and the wicked are not unfrequently combined in the same individual. It is an illustration of the schism which sin hath introduced into our nature, and it is one of the means of probation by which God tries us in this mixed state of things. But confining our attention to the principle about which we are speaking—the principle of order—we find, that as it is suited to our intelligent, it is also made to minister to the gratification of our emotional nature. The harmonies which aid our practical sagacity, and which enable science to rise to its grand generalizations, also gratify the taste, and enable poetry to sing some of its loftiest strains. Hence it is that the useful, through the power of association, ministers to the love of the beautiful. The symmetry that is found to be so beneficial, comes at last to be loved for its own sake as associated with the benefits that flow from it. All harmonies come to be pleasant to the mind as connected with the idea of order, and the blessings which order diffuses.* Not that we are thereby, as some imagine, enabled to rid ourselves of an intuitive principle of taste altogether. For even though we should be driven to acknowledge, (which we do not acknowledge,) that there is nothing in the love of the beautiful but the influence of association, we would, in the very susceptibility of such associations, and of a pleasure derived from them, discover a natural principle, of which the praise belongs to God, who hath so constituted us. And whatever be our theory of beauty, we may discern in the prevailing harmonies so suited to our thirst for knowledge, so adapted to our taste for the beautiful, a proof of the beneficence of God, who hath formed the world without to awaken echoes in the soul within ; and to promote at one and the same time the enlargement of the experience, the quickening of the understanding, and the refinement of the feelings.

Let us now collect into one system the adaptations which we have been observing separately. Let us observe first the internal principles, and then the correspondence of the external facts:—

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* There is surely more than one kind of beauty. There is a physical beauty, as in music, harmonious colours, and probably, also certain forms. There is a moral beauty in certain mental qualities. Between these, there is an intellectual beauty. All these agree in raising feelings, which, with not a few differences, do so far resemble each other. Confining our attention to intellectual beauty, it seems clear to us that there is a feeling of beauty excited by the spontaneous, unconscious, or rather unreflective observation of a series of relations. Hence the pleasure which the mind feels in rhyme and rhythm, in balancings, correspondences, parallelisms, in alliteration, antithesis, contrasts. Hence, too, the delight experienced by the mind in contemplating the obvious relations of whole and parts, of means and end, of form, number, property, which everywhere present themselves in nature. We believe that the feeling raised becomes more intense according to the number and variety of the relations observed, provided always, that they are so obvious that they can be noticed spontaneously, and without any such intellectual straining as may interfere with the emotion. There is a special beauty in unity with variety—as seen in the curve lines, and compensatory though not uniform balancings of nature; and also in the varied agents at work around us, conspiring to promote one end. So far, then, as intellectual beauty is concerned, there is truth in the theory of Augustine, that beauty consists in order and design, and in that of Hutcheson and Cousin, that it consists in unity with variety, and in that of Diderot, that it consists in relations.

Internal Principles.	External Facts.
I. The natural love of combined variety and sameness.	I. The number of elements sufficient to produce variety without confusion.
II. The intuition which leads us to connect cause and effect.	II. The causal connexion between all events.
III. The attainment of knowledge by experience.	III. (1.) All phenomena have a natural cause. (2.) Material substances are so adjusted as to admit of their acting causally. (3.) Causes are so adjusted as to produce general laws of succession.
IV. The faculties that generalize and classify, in order to the attainment of knowledge, (1.) practical, and (2.) scientific.	IV. The principle of order throughout the world, in respect of number, form, colour, &c.; and this order, (1.) palpable and obvious, (2) varied.
V. The love of the beautiful.	V. (1.) The harmonies in nature. (2.) These harmonies beneficent as well as beautiful.

With such proofs as these of the benignity of law, we are not jealous of the discovery of it in the government of the world. We rather rejoice in every extension which is given to it; and feel as if, by enlarging it, we were restricting the supposed domains of chance, and widening the real dominions of God, and doing what civilisation and improving agriculture accomplish, when they drive back the ignorance, the wastes and wilds of our country, to spread knowledge, and order, and fertility in their room.

We are aware, that when the existence of God is denied, it is needful so to define and explain the laws of nature as to show that they are not a substitute for the Divine Being. But when we have established the existence of God, we rejoice to discover the presence of law everywhere—as much as the mariner might rejoice to detect the footprints of human beings on the desolate shore on which he has been cast; for wherever we find law, there we see the certain traces of a lawgiver.

Care must be taken, however, in speaking of laws as so universal, not to represent this plan of procedure as separating God from his works. We believe God to be as intimately connected with the operation of his hands, as if he was doing all by special miracle. Every event is to be understood as ordered by God, just as certainly as if it had taken place in a world in which there were no other causes than the Divine volitions. We discover that the laws according to which all events occur are appointed by God; we can farther discover the exact adaptation of this arrangement to the nature of man; and instead of feeling less disposed to see God in his works because of this constitution of things, we are all the more inclined to discover, and when we discover, to admire his wisdom and beneficence.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTE (C.)—DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PHILOSOPHICAL OBSERVATION AND PRACTICAL SAGACITY—RELATION OF SCIENCE AND ART.

The remarks made may enable us to understand the difference between the SHREWD OBSERVER and the PHILOSOPHER. The one notices the various lesser and more obvious laws of the occurrences in the world, and the palpable workings of human nature; while the other rises to the more general causes from which they proceed.

The person who has observed the ways of the world around him becomes a man of shrewdness and sagacity; and in regard to the pursuits in which he feels an interest, his vision can penetrate to an astonishing distance, and with most singular accuracy. It is this quality which leads, according to the object to which it is directed, to distinction in the competitions of trade, commerce, or politics. It is much the same talent, directed to a higher class of objects, which produces sagacity in historical research. When the observer, endowed with a spiritual vision, takes in a higher class of laws—the laws of God's providence—his wisdom assumes a loftier form; and from his knowledge of the Divine ways, he can look still farther into the future. The historian, Dr. M'Crie,* occurs to us as an eminent instance of an individual possessing this species of sagacity, and able to anticipate the events that are to come, from a knowledge of the Divine ways in times past. Proverbs of a worldly or a divine character are the forms in which the more certain of the general observations of which we are speaking find their appropriate expression. Wise sayings, apothegms, maxims, and pointed remarks, are the forms which others assume; while thousands floating in the mind, and used daily by the sagacious, have never been expressed, and never will be expressed in words.

The philosopher is distinguished from these shrewd observers, in so far as he seeks for the causes of the general phenomena which present themselves in the actual world. Herein is Adam Smith distinguished from the practical statesman and skilful politician. Herein are philosophic historians, such as Montesquieu; Robertson, in his Introduction to Charles V.; Guizot, in his works on Modern Civilisation; and the speculatists of Germany, who arrange all events into epochs,

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* See his Life by his Son.

—herein are these distinguished from the mere recorders of events, such as the ancient chroniclers, and from that pictorial school which claims Sir Walter Scott for its founder.

In the common transactions of life, the power of shrewd observation is infinitely more useful than philosophy. We know not that Adam Smith could have been prime minister of Great Britain, though his writings have determined the destinies of more than one cabinet. On the other hand, the views of the enlightened philosopher will be found, in the end, not only to be the grander but the more useful, for he proceeds on causes extensively or universally operative. The genius of Adam Smith and Burke will ultimately exercise a greater sway upon the laws of the kingdom, and the sentiments of the inhabitants, than the practical wisdom of Pitt and Fox.

It may be expected, that the man whose range of vision is confined, should, within his own field, be shrewder than others whose eyes have been wandering over a larger surface. He who has never passed beyond his native valley will anticipate the events that are immediately to occur in it more accurately than the individual who has visited every quarter of the globe. The telescope cannot be used in looking at the blood-vessels of an insect. On the other hand, the microscope cannot be employed in resolving the nebulæ of the heavens into stars. The eye that is exquisitely formed for observing objects which are small and near, sees large and distant objects dimly and confusedly. The observer who is sharp enough in his own little field, falls into innumerable blunders when he would utter general truths bearing a reference to the world and mankind at large. The wisdom of the shrewdest observer of men and manners in his own age appears very contracted to the student of universal history. The latter is apt to forget that even his wisdom appears narrow and short-sighted to the person who measures all things on the scale of eternity. It is the privilege of the philosopher, rising above the widest observer on the common elevations of the earth, to contemplate, as from a mountain eminence, the general shape and direction of all events. But rising far higher, the religious philosopher, contemplating these causes in the Divine mind, sees, as from the battlements of heaven, earth and time with all their revolutions spread out beneath him.

These principles also illustrate the RELATION BETWEEN SCIENCE AND ART. It is well known that art has in general preceded science. There were bleaching, dyeing, and tanning, and artificers in copper and iron, before there was chemistry to explain the processes used. Men made wine before there was any theory of fermentation; and glass and porcelain were manufactured before the nature of alkalis and earths had been determined. The pyramids of Nubia and Egypt, the palaces and sculptured slabs of Nineveh, the cyclopean walls of Italy and Greece, the obelisks and temples of India, the cromlechs and druidical circles of countries formerly Celtic, all preceded the sciences of mechanics and architecture.* There was music before there was a science of acoustics; and painting, while yet there was no theory of colours and perspective.

Nor is it difficult to account for all this on the principles which we have been developing. By the beneficent arrangements of God, general laws available for practical purposes can be discovered, while the causes that produce them are concealed. The mechanic and artist discover these general laws, and turn them immediately to the object which they contemplate—the production of useful or elegant works. They constitute those first observed and middle axioms—between infinite particulars on the one hand, and the highest generalizations on the other—

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* See Whewell's Phil. of Ind. Science, B. xi. c. viii.

on which Bacon sets such high value, and which he represents as making "the artsman differ from the inexpert." God has so disposed the agents of nature, that these laws are uniform; so long as they are so, the artist may use them without at all inquiring into the cause; and all the while no attempts may have been made to discover the cause, or science may have been defeated in all its attempts to find it. At the same time, it should be borne in mind, that when science succeeds in discovering the true cause, it may be the means of multiplying the resources, and widening indefinitely the dominion of art.

As a practical inference from the train of reflection pursued in these corollaries, let us mark that there are obvious and palpable laws which God hath placed before us, both in regard to the workings of the human soul and the mechanism of nature, and all to aid us in the accomplishment of important practical ends. All men are not intended to be philosophers, but all are expected to be practically useful; and hence, while there are only partial aids to science, there are universal aids to industry and to a benevolent activity. The philosopher, when he is baffled in some of his researches into more recondite causes, should, in the spirit of a true philosophy, comfort himself with the thought that mankind can accomplish so many important ends, even while these causes are yet undiscovered.

SECT. V.—CONNEXION OF GOD WITH HIS WORKS.

Physical inquirers, in prosecuting their method of induction, look upon all things from a particular point of view—they look at them from the earth and from below, and their views are in consequence, to some extent, narrow and contracted. In this Treatise, without departing from the same method of induction, we may, after having arrived at the knowledge of the existence of God, look at all things from another and a higher point of view—we may look at them, from time to time, from above. Astronomers must begin their investigations by taking the earth as their basis, and regarding it as their centre; but after having determined in this way that the sun is the true centre, they change their point of view, and look on the whole planetary system from the sun as the central point, and their measurements become heliocentric instead of geocentric. All inquirers into heavenly truth, proceeding in an inductive method, must, like astronomers, begin with the earth; but after having proceeded a certain length, and determined that there is a God, they may view all things as from heaven. It is when surveyed from both points that we attain the clearest idea of their exact nature and relation one to another, and to God.

The finite cannot comprehend the infinite, and so no man should presume to point out all the ways in which a God of unbounded resources might govern the universe. According to the well-known Theodicée of Leibnitz, God had had before him, in the depths of eternity, an infinite number of possible worlds, and out of these selected the one which was most beneficent, upon the whole, and this though it comprised within it certain incidental but necessary evils, not found in other possible worlds, which, however, had not the same amount of good. Whatever may be thought of this ingenious speculation, it is evident that God might have governed the universe in a different mode from that actually employed. It is conceivable, in particular, that he might have ordered the affairs of this world in some other way than by the method of general laws.

Superficial thinkers, disposed to materialism and atheism, are apt to conclude that there is a necessity of some kind for the existence of these laws. But we have only to view this world from the point from which God surveyed it at its creation, to discover that it was at least possible for God to act after a different method. The determination to govern the world by general laws was an act of the Divine mind, swayed by all-wise reasons and motives, and not at all by stern necessity.

It does not even appear that, in selecting such a method, God could have been influenced by considerations of convenience. On a cursory view, we might be tempted to conclude that God must have adopted such a mode of operation in order to lighten the burden of his government. But in drawing this inference, we proceed on ideas derived from human weakness. The ingenious workman constructs a machine, and then leaves it to itself; and we leap to the conclusion that, after having created and adjusted the world, God consigned it to its own operation. But the two cases, including the parties employed and the circumstances, are essentially different. The human workman forms no laws or properties of matter—his whole object is to accommodate his materials to the existing laws of nature which now accomplish his purposes.* He has discovered that certain agents of nature, or, as we would rather express it, certain agents of God, will serve his ends; he skilfully takes advantage of them, and his work is done. But in this he is acting merely as the traveller or the merchant, who uses a particular conveyance for the transmission of his person or his goods, and who thereby, no doubt, lessens his own toil, but not the total amount of labour needful for the end effected. The connexion of God with the laws of his own appointment is altogether different from man's relation to them. Through the bountiful arrangements of God, man can lessen his toil, and leave his works to nature and to God to conduct them; but it does not therefore follow that God can, or that he does, commit his works to themselves. Speaking correctly and philosophically, the general laws of nature are just rules which God has laid down for the regulation of his own procedure. It is not that, as a Being omnipresent and omnipotent, ever watchful and ever active, he needs those helps which man requires in consequence of his infirmities. The Almighty can never be weighed down under the burden of his government. He adopts the mode of procedure by general laws, not for his own convenience, but for that of his intelligent creatures.

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* Ad opera nil aliud potest homo quam ut corpora naturalia admoveat et amoveat, reliqua natura intus transigit.—(Nov. Org. Aph. iii.)

It is not difficult to discover the utility of this method of action. It is the regularity of the laws of nature which leads us to put confidence in them, and enables us to make profitable use of them. Without such order and uniformity man could have no motive to industry, no incentive to activity. Disposed to action, he would ever find action to be useless, for he could not ascertain the tendency, and much less the exact effect, of any step taken by him, or course of action adopted. Suppose that, instead of rising regularly at a known time, the sun were to appear and disappear like a meteor, no one being able to say where, or when, or how, all human exertion would cease in a feeling of utter hopelessness. If, instead of returning in a regular manner, the seasons were to follow each other capriciously, so that spring might be immediately succeeded by winter, and summer preceded by autumn, then the labour of the husbandman would be at an end, and the human race would perish from the earth. In such a state of things mankind would not have sufficient motive to do such common acts as to partake of food, for they could not anticipate that food might support them. With such a system, or rather want of system, pervading the world, suspicion and alarm would reign in every breast; man would sink into indolence, with all the accompanying evils of reckless audacity and vice; "fears would be in the way," and he would dread the approach of danger from every quarter; feel himself confused as in a dream, or lost as in darkness; or rather, after leading a brief and troubled existence, he would disappear from the earth. "Now, if nature," says Hooker, in a passage which we quote for its masculine old English, as well as the correctness of its sentiment,* "should intermit her course, and leave altogether, though it were but for a while, the observation of her own laws—if those principal and mother elements, whereof all things in this lower world are made, should lose the qualities which they now have—if the frame of that heavenly arch erected over our heads should loose and dissolve itself—if celestial spheres should forget their wonted motions, and, by irregular volubility, turn themselves any way as it might happen—if the prince of the lights of heaven, which now as a giant doth run his unwearied course, should, as it were, through a languishing faintness, begin to stand and to rest himself—if the moon should wander from her beaten way—the times and seasons blend themselves by disordered and confused mixture, the winds breathe out their last gasp, the clouds yield no rain, the earth be defeated of heavenly influence, the fruits of the earth pine away as children at the withered breast of their mother, no longer able to yield them relief—what would become of man himself, whom these things do now all serve?"

How unreasonable, then, as well as ungrateful, the conduct of those who fail to discover the presence of God in his works, and that because of the existence of these laws, so beautiful in themselves, and benignant in their aspect towards us. Every person sees that the blessings which God lavished upon the Hebrews, in that desert which now supports but four thousand of a population, but was made to support upwards of two millions and a half for a period of forty years, were not the less, but all the more the gifts of God, from the circumstance that they were bestowed in a somewhat regular manner. No one will affirm that the manna was the less bountiful proof of the care of God, because, in order to suit the convenience of the Israelites, it did not fall irregularly, but at periodical intervals, and was gathered every morning, that those who partook of it might be strengthened for the journey of the day. And will any one maintain that our daily food is less the gift of God, because it is sent not at random, but in appointed ways, and at certain seasons, that we may be prepared to receive it? Was the water of which the Israelites drank less beneficent because it followed them all the way through the wilderness? No one will affirm that it was: and yet there are persons who feel as if they did not require to be grateful for the water of which they drink, because it comes to them from the clouds of heaven, and the fountains which gush from the earth.

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* Eccles. Polity, B. i.

We condemn the Hebrews when we read of their ingratitude, and yet we imitate their conduct. When the manna first fell, and they saw abundance of food on the bare face of the desert, gratitude heaved in every breast; but how short a time elapsed till they began to look upon the manna in much the same light as we look upon the dews of the evening, or the crops in harvest—as something regular and customary, the denial of which might justify complaint, but the bestowal of which was not calculated to call forth thankfulness! Because the water flowed with them through all their journey, so that the heat of a burning sun could not exhale it, nor the thirsting sand of the desert drink it up, just because it continued all the time as fresh and as cool as when it leapt from its parent rock, they came to regard it with as little wonder as we do the stream which may run past our dwelling. The pillar of cloud hung continually before them, so that the rays of a meridian sun could not dissipate it, nor the winds of heaven drive it away; and they came at last to be no more grateful for it than we usually are for the light of the sun returning every morning. Just because this pillar of cloud was kindled into a pillar of fire every evening, they became as familiar with it as we are with the stars which God lights up nightly in the firmament. The younger portion of the people, born in the desert, and long accustomed to these wonders, may have come to look upon them as altogether natural, and would no more be surprised at the sight of the fiery pillar casting its lurid glare upon the sands, than we are with the meteor that flashes across the evening sky. Does it not appear as if it were the very frequency of the gift, and the regularity of its coming, which lead mankind to forget the Giver? It is as if a gift were left every morning at our door, and we were at length to imagine that it came alone without being sent. It is as if the widow whose meal and oil were blessed by the prophet, had come at length to imagine that there was nothing supernatural in the transaction, just because the barrel of meal did not waste, and the cruse of oil did not fail.

In order to prove that God is closely connected with his works in nature, it is not needful to determine what is his precise causal connexion with events which have also second causes in the heaven-endowed properties of created substances. Does God co-exist and co-operate with every natural cause, the two being united to form one cause? Or do the natural antecedents themselves form the whole cause, being linked to the will of God only so far as they are the distant effect of that will, as the first great cause of all things? So far from being inclined to answer these questions in a dogmatic way, we are not even convinced that these two exhaust the possible methods which God may employ in conducting his works, or that there may not be a third or a fourth way, all available to God, and this whether conceivable or inconceivable by man.

It has often been asserted, that we have no evidence of God being connected with his works in any other way than his being the first cause of all things, the support on which the highest link in the chain of inferior causes hangs. We have only to consider what is the nature of the argument in behalf of the existence of God, to discover that this assertion has no foundation to rest on. That argument has sometimes been stated as follows—Every event has a cause, and in tracing up causes we must stop at length at a great first cause. So far as the argument assumes this form, the assertion which we are examining may seem to have some plausibility. But this is not the form in which the argument is put by its most judicious defenders. The better form is—There are traces of design in nature evidential of a designing mind. And observe how this argument does not limit us to the conception of God as a first link, but rather inclines us to look for the presence of the designing mind wherever there are traces of design, and that is everywhere throughout the works of nature.

There is a view prevalent among the votaries of physical science, as to the connexion of God with his works, which seems to us to be meagre and unsatisfactory in the extreme. It is conceived that, at some distant period in eternity which cannot be defined, the Deity, by a single act of his will, caused the whole universe to start forth into existence; that he impressed every substance which he created with its several self-acting properties; and that he himself has continued ever since an inactive spectator. This view has always seemed to us, if not positively erroneous, at least lamentably defective. It forgets a great many more truths than it remembers. It forgets that the omnipresent God is present among all his works; that the omniscient God knoweth all that is done; that the all-benevolent God feels an interest in the welfare of all his creatures, at all places and at all times; and that the holy Governor of the universe is ever watching over all their actions. If these other truths be added, we do not feel such a repugnance to the theory, because it comes now to be different in its nature, and different in its practical impression upon the mind, and is totally opposed to the loose creed of the ancient Epicureans and modern infidels. When we take these farther truths into account, they serve not only morally to counteract the evil tendency of the view which we regard as so bare and heartless, but also to lead us to doubt whether the theory is not altogether without foundation. For if God is present in all his works, and interested in them, is it reasonable to suppose that he is inactive in the midst of them? Are all his other perfections to be exercised, and his omnipotence to have no room for exertion? As far as we can reason on a theme which is so transcendental in its nature, it seems highly improbable that God should have so constituted everything as to leave no room for his own continued action. As he fills universal space, and can never cease to love his own work, it is reasonable to think that he pervades the universe as an active agent. It may be difficult to determine the precise nature of his action; but, with no experience of a world without an indwelling God, we are inclined to regard his indwelling in the actual world as essential to its continued existence and operation. The substance and qualities of bodies being as they are, must ever operate as they do; but they are such as they are through the necessary inhabitation of a Divine Agent.

There is another view commonly supported by divines. Jonathan Edwards somewhere illustrates the manner in which God sustains the universe, by the way in which an image is upheld in a mirror. That image is maintained by a continual flow of rays of light, each succeeding pencil of which does not differ from that by which the image was at first produced. He conceives that the universe is, in every part of it, supported in a similar way by a continual succession of acts of the Divine will, and these not differing from that which at first caused the world to spring into existence. Now, it may be safely said of this theory that it cannot be disproved. No one will affirm that an everywhere present and an almighty God could not conduct his administration on such a plan. Several considerations may be urged in support of it. Had God not seen fit to proceed by general laws in the government of the world, it would have been acknowledged that every separate event required a separate operation of the Divine will. And why, it may be asked, when God sees fit, for beneficent reasons, to act otherwise, should it ever be supposed that such Divine agency is not equally needed? It would be required, as is acknowledged, in an irregular system—and why should it not be held as necessary in the systematic mode of Divine government actually employed?

But if the view cannot be disproved, it may be doubted whether it can be proved by conclusive evidence. The human mind is discussing subjects beyond its capacity, when determining the precise causal connexion of God, as the first cause, with the second causes which he hath ordained. Unsolved and unsolvable questions present themselves when we push our inquiries beyond a certain limit. How does He inhabit all space?—how does He inhabit the same space which seems to be filled with matter?—what is the precise nature of the Divine volitions?—what, in particular, is the nature of the continual acts of the will by which, according to Edwards, the universe is sustained in every part of it? These inquiries carry us into depths into which the schoolmen would have rushed with eagerness, to swim or sink to no purpose, but which we have truly no sounding-lines to fathom.

We are satisfied if the Epicurean view of Deity, inactive and unconcerned, be discarded, and when it is acknowledged that God is ever active, and benevolent in his activity; ever benevolent, and active in his benevolence; in all places and at all times the Guardian of all his creatures, and the Inspector of all their actions.

SECT. VI.—INFINITE POWER AND WISDOM REQUIRED TO GOVERN A WORLD SO CONSTITUTED.

There is wisdom displayed, we have seen, in the circumstance that the world is governed by general laws, and in the relation of the various substances and laws to each other. But the plan, as it is devised by Divine wisdom, requires Divine wisdom to execute it. One trembles at the very idea of its execution being committed to any other than a being whose intelligence and resources are unbounded.

Yet we may for an instant imagine a world so constituted being committed to the government of a being high and exalted, but yet finite—to one of the younger gods of heathen fable, or of the angels of revelation. And when first set in motion, it might look as if all was harmoniously planned, and as if every emergency had been provided for. For a time, the system moves on with beautiful regularity; but suddenly, and at some distant point, events come into unexpected contact, then into violent collision; and evil is threatened at points where there is nothing to meet it. Laws, beautiful in themselves, are crossed, accelerated, or interrupted by other laws; and thousands of living beings in certain parts of the world are left neglected, or are placed in terrific circumstances, owing to some omission or oversight. Disorder, beginning in a corner which had been overlooked, soon spreads in widening circles to other districts, or to other worlds. The very compactness of the connexion in which all things are bound serves only to extend the prevailing confusion and misery. Had the various parts of the world not been so linked together, the evil might have died and disappeared at the place where it began its ravages. But human beings were never so crowded in a city where plague has broken out in fearful virulence, as the objects of this world are concatenated by their various relations; and plague spreading itself through that city, till every district was infected, is a picture on a small scale of the manner in which evil, once breaking out, would propagate itself from one country and one world to another. The intelligent creation, as they surveyed the advancing disorder, would be confounded and dismayed; and we can conceive that the governor of the world would at last feel himself terror-struck in the survey of the evil he was producing.

But why should he not interfere, it may be said, to prevent the evil? The answer is, that, according to the principles which we have been developing, every such interference would be an evil, so far, at least, as it proceeded from weakness. For the intelligent creatures gather their experience from a state of things in which all events proceed by general laws; and so far as these laws were interfered with or suspended, they would find their experience avail them nothing, or positively misleading them; and confusion would spread itself, not merely in the physical universe, but among all its now amazed and awe-struck population. The world, in short, would reach the state in which we have seen a powerful machine—a steam-engine, for instance—with part of it broken, or out of joint, moving on more rapidly than ever, but now with an all-destructive energy. The only resource of the governor of the engine, in the case supposed, is to stop it as soon as possible; and we believe that a finite creature governing this world would soon feel himself in a similar condition, and find it to be his wisest and most benevolent course to abolish, as speedily as possible, the world which he was so misgoverning.

We live, it is manifest, in the midst of a system, every one part of which is adapted with the greatest nicety to every other. We see before us what we reckon a useless plant; and we conclude that the species might be eradicated, and no evil follow. But the conclusion is rash. For the seed of that plant may be needful to the support of some kind of bird, or the root of it to some insect; that bird or insect may serve an important purpose in the economy of the earth; and were we completely to root out that plant bearing seed after its kind, we might throw the whole of nature into inextricable confusion.

How difficult (humanly speaking) to make every one arrangement of a universe so complicated, and yet so connected, to harmonize with every other! It is reckoned a proof of the highest genius in a general to be able to make skilful combinations. The mere discipline of each particular regiment, however orderly, and the courage of the troops, however great, will not avail, unless the commander can marshal and dispose the forces under his control. The very size of an army under an unskilful leader (like Xerxes) may only be the means of rendering it more unwieldy, and securing it sspeedier defeat. The general is showing his highest qualities when he can bring all his troops into action at the most befitting moment, and cause them all, without loss of force, to bear directly or indirectly on the object in view. Every reflecting mind will acknowledge, that, in like manner, the wisdom of God is peculiarly seen in those skilful arrangements by which no part of the universe is useless, and every part conspires to the accomplishment of the end intended. What wise combinations are needed in order that the wants of every living creature may be supplied in the proper time and way! Every one knows what skill is required in order to provide food for an army marching through a hostile country. But we are comparing small things to things infinitely great, in illustrating by this feeble means, suited to our feeble capacity, the task which can be undertaken only by the Almighty, of providing for the wants of the myriads of his creatures. Omniscience is necessary to the planning of such a system, omnipotence and omnipresence to its execution. The end must be seen from the beginning, and the result of every law and combination of laws foreknown and anticipated; and there must be a living agent pervading and giving life to his works in every part of his dominions. When we believe that there is such a being, we feel as if all were safe and secure; for we know that there never can be derangement in works planned by infinite wisdom and protected by an everywhere present and ever watchful guardian. Such a faith will impart a holy courage even to the most timid; we feel as if we might be unalarmed amid the conflagration of worlds, and while the visible universe is passing away.

SECT. VII.—UNITY OF THE MUNDANE SYSTEM; LIMITS TO NATURAL LAW.

We may distinguish between the Universe (*τὸ ὅλον*) and the part of the universe with which we are connected, and which we may call the Cosmos, including all that system of which the earth and visible heavens are a portion.

Astronomers are apt to boast that they give us a very enlarged view of the universe, when they tell us of the myriads of stars and systems of stars, which fall within the range of the telescope. But it has always appeared to us, that this whole system of suns may not bear so great a relation to the whole universe, as a single apple-tree, or a single apple, to a whole orchard loaded with divers fruits, or to all the trees on the earth's surface; or as a single leaf bears to the whole leaves of a forest, or to all the natural products of our globe. Beyond the sidereal heavens, there may be systems differing from our system—from these clusters of stars—as much as the plant differs from the stone, or the animal from the plant, or the mind from the body "When nature," says Hume, "has so entirely diversified her manner of operation in this small globe, can we imagine she incessantly copies herself throughout so immense a universe?"* Sir Isaac Newton thinks it may be allowed that God might make "worlds of several sorts in several parts of the universe."† That law of gravitation which astronomers all but deify, may turn out, after all, to regulate but a comparatively small portion of the bodies that people universal space. There may be myriads of other systems as grand and as glorious as ours, regulated by other laws equally beautiful; and manifesting, by their variety, the infinite riches of the Divine perfections. Geologists would enlarge our conceptions of Time by unfolding the progressive epochs of the earth's history. But we would be inclined to extend our conceptions into eternity, beyond even the unnumbered years of the geologic eras. There may have been other epochs which had come to a close before the history of our Cosmos began.

But however this may be, it seems as if, within limited space and time, there is a distinct compartment of God's works, which we call the Cosmos. This compartment, no doubt, has points of junction with others, but it may itself be separate; and it seems as if within it there is a system of uniform laws. The mountains in the moon—the apparent sea and land in Mars—the aërolites that fall from the heavens—the circumstance that our sun is a star in a particular galaxy, said to be hastening towards a point in the constellation Hercules, and that there are other and similar galaxies,—all seem to point to a homogeneity in the bodies which are to be found in knowable space. The connexion of the present state of the earth with the previous changes on the earth's surface, the traces in former epochs of the laws that are still in operation, and the prevalence of homologous forms, show that there has been a uniformity in all knowable time.

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* Dial. on Nat. Rel., p. 2.

† Optics.

The considerations urged in the previous sections show why it is that there is a system of general laws: it is for the good of the intelligent creatures, who attain knowledge by induction. But as this system of laws reaches through the whole Cosmos, geological and astronomical, does it not seem as if, throughout its unmeasured ages and space, there might be beings homogeneous so far to man as our earth and sun seem to be homogeneous to other suns and planets, and resembling him in this respect in particular, that they gather knowledge from experience, proceeding upon invariable general laws observed by them? Are there creatures a little higher than man, who have existed through all known time, and who ramble at pleasure through all known space, gathering an ever-increasing knowledge from the uniform laws of God? To these questions nature gives no very audible answer; though we have sometimes felt as if we heard it utter certain indistinct whispers, as we looked into the depths adorned by these rolling stars, and varied by these rolling epochs. We have at least listened so long to the silence of nature, as to be prepared to listen with gratitude to the distinct voice of revelation, when it announces the existence of angelic beings. Connecting the physical facts with the supernatural intelligence, we feel as if we had obtained, on the one hand, a final cause for the uniformity of general laws, through unnumbered ages and unmeasured space; and as if we were, on the other hand, the better enabled to entertain an exalted idea of those spiritual beings who excel in strength, and to understand how, in their unseen excursions, they should behold and feel the deepest interest in man, who is closely allied to them, for he was made a little lower than the angels.

The microscope has shown how the earth, air, and water, are crowded with sentient being, enjoying and propagating happiness. Revelation, and the highest philosophy, seem to combine their light, to show that all time has been peopled, and that all space is inhabited by spiritual intelligences. We live in the midst of a world that we see, but we live also in the midst of a world that we do not see. With that invisible world, the spiritual as well as the sentient, we may have numerous relations and points of connexion—we with them, and they with us, as parts of one great and connected system, embracing that portion of eternity and infinity which we call time and space.

Modern science, and more particularly the observations made by the telescope, and the recent disclosures of long geological epochs, have widened on every side, above and below, behind and before, our idea of the universe ; and man is magnified in the magnifying of his conceptions. But by so much as the mental exceeds the material, and the spiritual the sensible, do the discoveries of Divine revelation transcend all the discoveries of natural science, when the former disclose ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of angels and ministering spirits. The one class of discoveries tends to enlarge our conception of the universe more than even the other ; for if the mind is enlarged in the enlarged contemplation of the physical, how much more must it be elevated by the contemplation of the moral and the spiritual ? And is there no point at which the two sets of discoveries meet ?

In our own frame, we see the intimate connexion between the mental and the material. Around us we see the relation of harmonious nature to living intelligence. There are high points in all inquiry and speculation, at which the sensible seems to land us in the supra-sensible. There are places at which natural science seems to meet with revealed religion,—and as they meet, to speak of intelligences higher than man and higher than nature, but who may exercise an influence on man, and move in nature in accordance with its laws, which are adjusted for them as for us ; for them, so as not to interfere with us—and for us, so as not to interfere with them. We argue on a variety of grounds, that the heavenly bodies must be peopled with sentient being ;* and if each sun and planet has its isolated inhabitants, why, in the profusion of God's resources and love, may there not be common visitants of all the suns and all the planets, connecting them together by stronger ties than all their physical bonds? But these points lie on the very horizon of man's vision; and he can but conjecture what may be, without dogmatically affirming that he has discovered what actually is.

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* There are three arguments in behalf of a plurality of worlds. These are commonly confounded. There is, first, the argument from analogy. This argument is not strong, inasmuch as in many of the celestial bodies, the analogy fails, in respect to the points most essential to the life of a being like man. There is, secondly, the argument *a priori*, or deductive from the character of God. The objection to this is, that the instrument is too large to allow man to wield it. Doubtless all bodies serve a good end, but are we entitled to say what that end is ? Thirdly, there is the argument from final cause ; as, for example, from the moons to light the planets and the inhabitants of them. The three together afford a pretty strong presumption in favour of the heavenly bodies being inhabited, or what seems more probable in the case of some of them, in preparation for being inhabited. The third is the strongest, and under this head the common plan or homologies running through all space and time, seem to point to intelligent beings to contemplate them through all space and time. We may

There are narrow minds which can never take in more than one truth. Because natural law universally prevails, they would exclude everything but natural law. But though we seem to be able to trace the operation of continuous natural agents through ages of indefinite number, and regions of indefinite extent, we are not therefore to limit the power of the Omnipotent, and dogmatically affirm, that he is never to superinduce upon these agencies an immediate operation of his own will as the sole cause of the physical effects produced by him. On this subject, we should hold ourselves prepared to listen to that authenticated experience which furnishes the only evidence in favour of the prevalence of physical law. They are guilty of lamentable inconsistency who listen to experience when it testifies in favour of the continuity of natural law, but refuse to listen to that same evidence when it testifies of certain distinguished exceptions.

There is no fact which has been demonstrated more completely to the satisfaction of every man of real science, than that there is no known power in nature capable of creating a new species of animal, or of transmuting one species of animal into another.* Yet geology reveals, as among the most certain of its discoveries, the introduction of new species of living creatures at various periods in the history of the ancient earth. Finding no cause among natural agents fitted to produce the effect, we rise to the only known cause capable of producing it—the fiat of the Creator. All who acknowledge the creation of the world at the beginning, must be prepared to admit the possibility of subsequent acts of creation, and should be ready to believe, on the production of sufficient evidence, that there have actually been such acts. A

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be allowed to add, that the discussions of Whewell, Brewster, and Miller, will serve a good end, especially by restraining speculations as to world making and world constitutions, and by showing that we have no right to draw objections to Christianity from guesses without scientific basis.

* See Footprints of the Creator, by Hugh Miller, a work distinguished equally by its descriptive and ratiocinative power.

widely extended and an uniform experience testifies that physical law cannot give a new species of living creature, and shuts us up to the recognition of the Divine agency as the only power capable of the act.

Will any one venture to affirm, that the introduction of new life may not be an occasion worthy of the direct action of the original Creator, or an act beyond the capacity of any power inferior to that which created life at first? Or there may be a propriety, when new life is introduced, that it should be seen by the intelligent creation to be an extraordinary act. The visible agency of the Creator in such an interposition may be the means of awakening the attention of the creatures who observe his works, and prepare them for the operation of the new physical laws. By such acts, the Creator may show that he is still to be recognised as a power in the midst of other powers of nature, as well as a power above them.

If, as scientific research shows, the introduction of *animal life* seems to call for the energy of the Governor of the universe acting without an instrument, we should thereby be the better prepared to believe, when the needful evidence is produced, that there may be a similar exercise and display of power in the introduction of new *spiritual life*. Such grand interferences may be part of a system or law co-extensive with the history of the world; and the introduction of animal life in the ancient animal economies, may have a corresponding fact in the interposition of Deity to introduce spiritual life in the era of spiritual intelligences. The exceptions may form a rule or a law embraced within the great scheme of laws, and may constitute an essential part of the sublime system of the world.*

In all such cases, there is only the temporary and occasional superinduction of a cause known to exist and to be capable of the acts, though not usually acting after that particular mode of operation. And when that cause is known, and acknowledged to be acting after an extraordinary manner, no evil can possibly arise from it in misleading the intelligent creation. It is conceivable, on the contrary, that such an interposition may call their attention to the agency of the new life now introduced upon the scene. It will commonly be found, in regard to such interpositions, that they are only occasional, and after long intervals; that the miraculous agency is displayed only on the introduction of a new dispensation, and afterwards gives place to the ordinary operation of law; or that, when continued, as in the internal regeneration of fallen humanity, it is as a secret principle unseen by the world. Such exceptions, when known to be exceptions, and seen to serve a great and gracious end, rather confirm the general rule, and are in no way inconsistent with the continuous prevalence of subordinate causes in the ordinary course of the Divine administration.

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* Miracles, we have seen, (note, p. 114,) are not inconsistent with the intuitive principle of cause and effect. We have now shown that they may fall in with the general principle of order. There is therefore no anterior improbability against them. But it should be added, that they ought never to be represented (as they have been of late by some persons friendly to religion) as *natural;* for their peculiarity is, that they do not proceed from the scheme of physical powers operating in the Cosmos, but from a *supernatural* cause known otherwise to exist.

CHAPTER II.

PROVIDENCE; OR, THE PRINCIPLE OF SPECIAL ADAPTATION.

SECT. I.—COMPLICATION OF NATURE RESULTING IN FORTUITIES.

Two great principles run through every part of the works of God. The one is the PRINCIPLE OF ORDER, or a general plan, to which every given object is conformed with amazing skill. The other is the PRINCIPLE OF SPECIAL ADAPTATION, by which each object, while formed after an ideal pattern, is at the same time, and by an equally wonderful skill, accommodated to the situation which it occupies, and the purpose which it has to serve. In the organic kingdoms we discover a type for every particular species of plant and animal, for every leaf and every limb. Mr. Owen has demonstrated that there is a large series of homologous bones running through the whole vertebrate class of animals, from fishes up to man. But Cuvier and Sir C. Bell had previously shown that these bones are shortened or lengthened, strengthened or lightened, bent or straightened, to suit the particular functions and habits of every living creature. We are convinced that these two principles may be detected in other departments of nature as well as the organic. The science which treats of the one might be called—were it not that the word has been so abused—Cosmology; the science which treats of the other has an admirable phrase allotted to it, in Teleology.

Had our subject required it, we might have shown that these principles pervade the whole of nature;* but in this treatise we have to consider them merely in their reference to man. Having in last chapter traced the principle of order, as assuming the form of general laws to be contemplated by man, we are in this chapter to trace the principle of particular adaptation also in its reference to man, when it may be called the providence of God. It is, in our view, by far the most remarkable characteristic of man's present condition.

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* In an article in the North British Review, Aug. 1851, the author sought to show, (1,) that the principles of order and adaptation run through all nature; (2,) that the principle of order is suited to man's intelligence; (3,) that there is an analogous typical system, with special adaptations, running through the revealed dispensations of God. But this whole subject, with the co-existence and correlation of its two principles, is so important in itself, and at the same time so misunderstood and perverted, that the author proposes to discuss it in a separate treatise, giving the religious signification of the late discoveries in natural history.

" It is quite evident," says Dr. Brown,* " that even omnipotence, which cannot do what is contradictory, cannot combine both advantages—the advantage of regular order in the sequences of nature, and the advantages of an uniform adaptation of the particular circumstances of the moment to the particular circumstances of the individual. We may take our choice, but we cannot think of a combination of both; and if, as is very obvious, the greater advantage be that of uniformity of operation, we must not complain of evils to which that very uniformity which we cannot fail to prefer—if the option had been allowed us—has been the very circumstance that gave rise."

We are not obliged to take our choice between the one or the other of the two alternatives propounded. The combination spoken of as being beyond human thought is realized in the works of God; and, in order to discover it, we have only to open our eyes sufficiently wide to take in the double method which God employs in his providence. God cannot do things which are really contradictory, but he can reconcile things which may seem to us to be contradictory. Things which appear incompatible to human wisdom are found in harmonious union and co-operation in the works of God. It is in the happy combination of apparent contradictions that we discover one of the most wonderful properties of the Divine administration.

The system of regular laws has its advantages; and we have been at pains to point them out in the last chapter. But, as Dr. Brown perceives, it has also, if uncontrolled, its disadvantages. It is easy to conceive what prejudicial effects would follow from the unbending operation of natural laws, if they were never curbed or restrained. Every one of the laws might be good in itself, and yet incidental effects might follow, fitted to inflict injustice on individuals, and the direst injury on society. The doctrine of a narrow philosophy, which admits nothing but uncompromising law, has always been felt to be a very uncomfortable one. Truly, it is little consolation to the man disabled for life by an accident which he could neither have anticipated nor prevented, to tell him, in answer to the groans which his pain is wringing from him, that his calamity occurred through a very beautiful law,—that it is a good thing that stones fall, and that fire burns, and thus brought down that building in the ruins of which he was found. The widow's tears, which flow as she weeps over a husband whose ship has perished in the waters, will not be dried up by the mere observer of mechanical laws coming to her and explaining that winds blow, and waves rage, and that it is for the advantage of mankind that they should. To those who could bring no other consolation, the heart would respond, "Miserable comforters are ye all; ye are physicians of no value."

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* Lect. 94.

The mind of man has always instinctively recoiled from the attempts made to persuade it that there is nothing in the world but all-sweeping and unbending general law; and truly, in such matters the hearts of our peasantry have been wiser than the heads of our philosophers. Is there no way by which all the advantages arising from the fixed sequences, and the regular courses of nature, may be secured, without our being obliged to submit to the disadvantages which are supposed to be inherent in the system? There is such a method, we are convinced, devised by the wisdom of God, and displayed in actual operation in his Providence.

It is conceivable that God might have so constituted this world that there should have been nothing but general laws, few in number, and free from all complexity. For example, there might only have been a few such laws as those of universal gravitation, the results of which could have been calculated with ease and certainty. All coming events, in such a system, could have been counted on as confidently as the position of the planets, as the periodical return of the tides, as the eclipses of the sun and moon. But it is evident, at the first glance, that man is not placed in such a state of things. Again, it is conceivable that the laws of nature might have been as numerous as they are, but arranged so simply as to combine in the most perspicuous and incomplex results. It is after this manner, so far as we can discover, that the laws of nature operate in the heavens, furnishing an order, not only real, but obvious. But it is just as evident that this is not the system adopted in the government of the earth, in many of the departments of which there appear to the eye of man only reigning confusion and uncertainty.

Our scientific inquirers, in investigating the separate laws, have not sufficiently attended to that PARTICULAR DISPOSITION AND DISTRIBUTION OF THE AGENTS OF NATURE, which necessarily issues in the uncertainty which everywhere meets our eye. The circumstance to which we refer arises from the COMPLICATION, and it gives rise to the FORTUITIES OF NATURE.

Man at times complicates the relations of natural powers, in order to produce fortuity. He shakes, for instance, the dice-box, in order that neither he nor any one else may be able to predict the die which is to cast up. There is, we maintain, a similar complication in the Divine arrangement of natural agents, and all to produce a similar end—to surround man with events which are to him accidental, but which to God are instruments of government.

We have seen that physical nature is so admirably adjusted as to produce a number of very beneficent general laws. The events occurring in this orderly manner may be anticipated, pains may be taken for welcoming them when they are expected to be good, and of avoiding or averting them when they are supposed to be evil. But all the results flowing from the adjustment of natural objects are not of this regular character. There are others, which, so far from being in accordance with any general law, are rather the result of the unexpected crossing and clashing, contact or collision, of two or more agencies. Falling out in an isolated, accidental manner, they cannot possibly be foreseen by the greatest human sagacity; the good which they bring cannot be secured by human foresight, nor can the evil which they produce be warded off by human vigilance.

Not that we are to regard the phenomena now referred to, as happening without a cause. Both classes of phenomena proceed from physical causes, but the one from causes so arranged as to produce general effects, and the other from causes so disposed as to produce an individual or isolated result. The general law of cause and effect is,—that the same correlated substances, in the same relations to each other, produce the same changes. Now, in the case of the events that occur according to general law, the relations continue the same, or are made to recur—and hence the regularity of the effects. In the case of the other events, the relations change—and hence the isolated nature of the effects; the same combinations of circumstances, the same adjustment of things, may never occur again, and so as to produce precisely the same results.

Hence it happens, that even when the causes are ascertained, the results, owing to the complicated relation of the substances and laws to one another, cannot be determined beforehand. There are departments of nature in which every property of matter in operation has been discovered by science, but in which it is absolutely impossible, owing to the way in which the laws cross each other, and the objects are crowded together, for the shrewdest sagacity to anticipate the future. We know many of the causes by which the motion of the winds is determined, but no one can tell how these winds may blow at any given time. Though we had ascertained all the laws of meteorology, we should not thereby be nearer the discovery of the probable weather at any particular time or place. "Not one of the agents," says Humboldt in the Cosmos, "such as light, heat, the elasticity of vapours, and electricity, which perform so important a part in the aërial ocean, can exercise any influence, without the result produced being speedily modified by the simultaneous intervention of all the other agents." "The confusion of appearances often becomes inextricable, and forbids the hope of our ever being able to foresee, except within the narrowest limits, the changes of the atmosphere, the foreknowledge of which possesses such an interest, with reference to the cultivation of orchards and fields, to navigation, and, generally, to the pleasures and welfare of mankind." We see how accident may abound in a world in which the operation of cause and effect is acknowledged to be universal.

This uncertainty, meeting us everywhere, appears more especially in those departments of God's works with which man is most intimately connected. This is a circumstance worthy of being noted. We may have occasion afterwards to inquire into the final cause, or the purpose served by it; meanwhile, we merely mark the circumstance itself. As we come closer to man, the elements of uncertainty become more numerous. How uncertain are all the events on which man's bodily and external welfare depends! He is dependent on the weather, and it is so variable that its changes cannot be anticipated. And yet it is scarcely more capricious than the whole course of events, prosperous or adverse, arising from his fellow-men, or from nature, on which his whole earthly destiny depends. But nowhere is this complication, with its consequent uncertainty, so strikingly displayed as in the constitution of his bodily frame. The most wonderful and ingenious of the physical works of God on the earth, it is also the most complex. Every one part is so dependent on every other, that the least derangement (and they are all liable to derangement) in any one of its organs may terminate in excruciating anguish, in wasting disease, or immediate death. A cut is inflicted on the thumb, and ends in lock-jaw. A sudden change takes place in the atmosphere which the individual breathes, and quickens into life a malady which wastes the lungs and the frame till it ends in dissolution. A particular vital vessel bursts, and instant death follows. A derangement takes place in the nerves or brain, and henceforth the mind itself reels and staggers. It appears that the uncertainty increases the nearer we come to man, and there is nothing so uncertain as bodily health and human destiny.

So far as man can observe, there is as much uncertainty in many departments of God's works as if there were no laws obeyed by them. The Romans were not singular in representing Fortune as blind, and worshipping her as a goddess who has extensive sway over the destinies of mankind. Not a few have rashly rushed to the conclusion that God does not rule in these heavens, or that his government does not extend to the earth.* Atheism, finding that it cannot blot out the Light from these heavens, has out of this seeming disorder endeavoured to raise a cloud of dust that may conceal it from the view. Unbelief, in gloomy waywardness, wanders for ever among these tangled woods and briars, and can find no outlet or road with an onward direction. The devout spirit, too, observes this strange complication; and in doing so, it wonders, and adores, and acknowledges that even when the most likely means are used, they cannot produce the end contemplated without what is expressively called the BLESSING OF HEAVEN.

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* See Lucretius, *passim.*

This prevalence of accident cannot, as some may be tempted to imagine, be accidental. It is in the very constitution of things. It is one of the most marked characteristics of the state of the world in which our lot is cast. It is, in fact, the grand means which the Governor of the world employs for the accomplishment of his specific purposes, and by which his providence is rendered a particular providence, reaching to the most minute incidents, and embracing all events and every event. It is the especial instrument employed by him to keep man dependent, and make him feel his dependence. A living writer of great genius has described the fact of which we are seeking to give an explanation. "But there is a higher government of men," says Isaac Taylor, "as moral and religious beings, which is carried on chiefly by means of the fortuities of life. Those unforeseen accidents which so often control the lot of men, constitute a superstratum in the system of human affairs, wherein peculiarly the Divine providence holds empire for the accomplishment of its special purposes. It is from this hidden and inexhaustible mine of chances, as we must call them, that the Governor of the world draws, with unfathomable skill, the materials of his dispensations towards each individual of mankind."*

If, in contemplating the general order that pervades the world, we seemed to fall in with beautiful figures rectilinear and circular, we feel now, in dealing with these fortuities, that we are ascending to curves of a higher order, and figures of greater complexity ; or rather as if we had got an infinitesimal calculus, in which every one thing is infinitely small, but in which the infinite units produce magnitudes and forces infinitely great. The curves are sometimes difficult of quadrature, and the differentials not easy to be integrated ; but still they form an instrument unequalled at once for its potency and its pliability, its wide extended range, and the certainty with which it hits the point at which it aims.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTE (D.)—PHENOMENA CLASSIFIED ACCORDING AS THEY ARE MORE OR LESS COMPLICATED.—REVIEW OF M. COMTE.

The complexity of nature is one of the most wonderful of its characteristics, though it is often overlooked in the present day by persons who are endeavouring to discover the universality of law.

It is, if we do not mistake, this complication of the causes and laws of nature, taken always in connexion with the cognitive and limited nature of man's faculties, which renders it so imperative on the part of the scientific inquirer to proceed in the inductive method. Had the works of God been differently disposed, and, in particular, had the various bodies been less complex in their relation to one another, it is conceivable that a different mode of investigation might have been available. Could the different properties of substances, as being kept clear and distinct, have been discovered by easy and direct observation, investigation would have consisted very much in inference, and the deductive method, as the most practicable, would have been universally employed. It is the multiplicity of relations in the disposition of the physical world which so baffles all *a priori* speculation, and which compels the inquirer to begin with a laborious investigation of facts, with the view of determining the laws according to which they occur, that thence he may rise to a knowledge of the properties of the different bodies. Hence, we suspect, the necessity for diligent observation and experiment, for careful compilation and co-ordination, before man can master any domain in nature. Had nature been throughout at once simple and clear in the order which it follows, we cannot see that there should have been such need of a laborious preparation. In such a state of things, man could have determined beforehand what nature must be in every one of its territories, as easily as the astronomer can tell the position of the moon or planets ten or twenty years hence.

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* Nat. Hist. of Enthusiasm.

There is one penetrating (though offensively arrogant) thinker of our day, who has not overlooked this characteristic of nature. We allude to M. Auguste Comte, who, in his work on Positive Philosophy, has given a classification of the sciences, arranged according as the phenomena of which they treat are more or less simple, or less or more complicated.*

" In considering," he says, " observable phenomena, we shall see that it is possible to classify them into a small number of natural categories, disposed in such a manner that the natural study of each category may be founded on the principal laws of the preceding category, and become the foundation of that which follows. *This order is determined by the degree of simplicity, or that which comes to the same thing, by the degree of generality of phenomena, from which result their mutual dependence and the greater or less facility of studying them.* It is clear, in fact, *a priori*, that the phenomena which are the most simple, those which complicate themselves the least with the others, are also the most general."† Following this principle, he arranges phenomena into two great divisions—those that are unorganized being the most simple, and those that are organized being more complicated. Taking up inorganic nature, he places (after mathematics) astronomy at the head of his hierarchy of the natural sciences. " Astronomical phenomena being the most general, the most simple, the most abstract, it is evidently by the study of them that we ought to commence natural philosophy; and the laws to which they are subjected have an influence on those of all other phenomena, while they are themselves, on the other hand, essentially independent."‡ He then goes on to show that terrestrial physics is a more complicated science than astronomy. " The simple movement of a falling body, even when it is a solid, presents, in reality, when we take into account all the determining circumstances, a subject of research more complicated than the most difficult question of astronomy."§ Proceeding to terrestrial physics, he shows that it is capable of being divided into two parts, according as we examine bodies under a mechanical or chemical point of view. Of these the former is evidently the simpler and more general, as all the properties of matter considered in physics, such as gravity, reappear along with other properties in chemistry. Rising to organized bodies, he divides the phenomena which present themselves into two classes—those which relate to the individual, and those which relate to the species—giving rise to what he calls organic physics and social physics. As the result of this discussion, philosophy finds itself naturally divided into six fundamental sciences, of which the succession is determined by a subordination, necessary and invariable, founded, independently of all hypothetical opinion, upon the simple comparison, in a profound manner, of the corresponding phenomena—these are, mathematics, astronomy, physics, chemistry, physiology, and, finally, social physics. The first considers phenomena the most general, the most abstract, and the *farthest removed* from humanity, and which have an influence on all others without being influenced by them. The phenomena considered in the last are, on the contrary, the most particular, the most complicated, the most concrete, the *most directly interesting to man*, and depend more or less on the preceding, without exercising any influence upon them. *Between these two extremes, the degrees of specialty, of complication, and of the personality of phenomena, go on gradually augmenting, as also their successive dependence.**

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* See Appendix V. on the LIVING WRITERS WHO TREAT OF THE INDUCTIVE PHILOSOPHY.

† Vol. i. pp. 86, 87. ‡ P. 91. § P. 92.

It is not to our present purpose to inquire into the merits of this encyclopædiacal division of the inductive sciences as compared with other schemes. We have alluded to it in order to call the attention to the great truth fixed on as its basis, and to the place which this basis gives to different natural phenomena, *which are arranged according as they are less or more complicated, farther from or nearer to humanity.*

There are certain phenomena so simple and so little complicated, that science, without much difficulty, arranges them into a system. In these departments of nature, science first made progress, and has continued to this day to make the greatest progress. In other parts of the works of God, the phenomena are more involved in their relations, and in them physical inquiry has made the latest and the least advancement. It is owing to this difference of complication that astronomy and physics have made great progress when compared with the physiology of plants and animals. In some of the departments of the sciences which deal with more complex data, M. Comte acknowledges that it will be difficult or impossible ever to arrive at clearly defined laws.

The grand aim of science he states to be the discovery of laws, and, through this discovery, the attainment of foresight, and the power of acting on nature. "We ought to conceive the study of nature as destined to furnish the true rational basis of the action of man upon nature, because the knowledge of the laws of phenomena, of which the invariable result is foresight, and it alone, can enable us in active life to modify them, the one by the other, to our advantage. In short, SCIENCE WHENCE FORESIGHT, FORESIGHT WHENCE ACTION—such is the simple formula which expresses in the simplest manner the general relation of science and art."† In the least complicated departments of nature, science having discovered a number of laws, gives considerable scope to foresight; and man is enabled to adapt his actions to what he foresees. In other fields in which the arrangements are more complicated, foreknowledge, and the power which foreknowledge confers, have as yet a very limited range; and there are parts of God's works, in regard to which it may be doubted whether science will ever be able to discover the assemblage of laws, or art to turn them to any profitable use.

The complication of nature, so baffling to human investigation, appears most strikingly in organized bodies. M. Comte says—"Every property of an organized body, be it geometric, be it mechanical, be it chemical, be it vital, is subjected in its quantity to immense numerical variations altogether irregular, which succeed each other at the briefest intervals, under the influence of a host of circumstances exterior and interior, and themselves variable in such a way that all idea of fixed numbers, and in consequence of mathematical laws, such as we can hope to find, imply in reality a contradiction to the special nature of the class of phenomena. Thus, when we wish to value with precision even the most simple qualities of a living being—for example, its mean density, or that of one of its principal parts, its temperature, the force of its internal circulation, the proportion of immediate elements that compose its solids or its fluids, the quantity of oxygen which it consumes in a given time, the mass of its absorptions and continual exhalations, &c., and, still more, the energy of its muscular powers, the intensity of its impressions, &c.—it is needful, not only, as is evident, to make for each of these results as many observations as there are species or races, and of varieties in each species—we need farther to measure the changes, not inconsiderable, which this quantity experiences in passing from one individual to another; and in reference to the same individual, according to its age, its state of health or disease, its internal disposition, and the circumstances of all kinds, and these incessantly changing, under the influence of which it finds itself placed, such as the constitution of the atmosphere, &c. It is the same, in a still higher degree, with social phenomena, which present a yet greater complication, and by consequence a yet greater variableness." He goes on to say, "that which engenders this irregular variability of the effect, is the great number of different agents determining at the same time the same phenomena; and from which it results in the most complicated phenomena, that there are not two cases precisely alike. We have no occasion, in order to find such a difficulty, to go to the phenomena of living bodies. It presents itself already in bodies without life, when we consider the most complex cases—for example, in studying meteorological phenomena." This advocate of the progress and power of knowledge is obliged to admit,—"*Their multiplicity renders the effects as irregularly variable as if every cause had not been subjected to any precise condition.*"*

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* Pp. 96, 97.

† Vol. i. pp. 62, 63.

It is only in certain departments of God's works that we can ever attain to anything like complete science, to extensive foresight, or that power which knowledge confers. And let it be especially remarked that human science, and human sagacity, and human potency, fail most in those parts of nature with which man is most intimately connected. As M. Comte again and again remarks, the phenomena which are the most simple and general, and therefore the most easily arranged into a science, are those "which are at the farthest distance from man,"† and the "farthest removed from humanity." Thus, the heavenly bodies, while utterly beyond man's reach or control, furnish in their laws and movements the easiest conquests to science. The most difficult problem in astronomy—that of the three bodies—is less complex than the most simple terrestrial problem. On the other hand, those phenomena which are the most complicated are the nearest to man, and the most directly interesting to him.‡ The laws of chemistry, for instance, on which man's sustenance so immediately depends, are more complicated than the movements of the heavenly bodies, or the mere mechanical laws of matter. The complication increases according as the objects attain a higher degree of organization, and becomes the greatest of all in the bodily frame of man, and, in that frame, in the nervous system, the part most intimately connected with the operations of the mind. When the social element is introduced, and animals and mankind are considered in their connexion with one another, the complication, and consequently the difficulty, of attaining foreknowledge and control over nature is greatly increased. The legitimate conclusion (not drawn by M. Comte, but legitimately drawn from his observations) is, that *man is impotent, in regard to the objects whose laws he can discover, and that he is ignorant and dependent in regard to the objects nearest himself, and with which he is most intimately connected.*

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* Pp. 153, 156. † P. 88. ‡ P. 96.

The distribution of physical phenomena by M. Comte will be found, when sifted, to have a double basis, and to proceed on two separate principles. He arranges nature according as it is less complicated or more complicated; but he arranges it, also, according as it is more removed or less removed from the control of humanity. Now, we cannot discover that these two are the same by any *necessity in the nature of things.* They correspond in fact; but this is not by any necessity, (though M. Comte seems to think so,) but by the appointment of God. We cannot see how the phenomena farthest removed from humanity should necessarily be the most simple and easily determined by science, nor that the phenomena with which man is most intimately involved must needs be the most complicated. We observe, indeed, the converse parallelism of the two, and that, in fact, the most simple phenomena are the farthest from human control, and that the phenomena nearest to man, and most under his power, are the most complicated; but we believe that this parallelism is, by the special appointment of the Governor of the world, for a very special purpose, which we hope to discover in the following section.

Meanwhile, let us mark the results at which we have arrived in taking a survey of those domains of nature which science investigates in the hope of discovering laws. Starting from astronomy, and thence going to physics and chemistry, and rising from these to physiology and social physics, we are always coming nearer to objects with which man is more intimately connected, and *we find as we proceed that the objects become more and more complicated.* And there are domains lying altogether beyond those claimed by science; and these are still more complex in their nature, and bear a still closer relation to man. There are phenomena in which science never attempts to discover law—they are so intricate and involved: and these, if we do not mistake, furnish the most potent of the agents employed by God in the government of man. These phenomena we are seeking in the text to catch as they fly past us, and to submit them to examination.

SECT. II.—PURPOSES SERVED BY THE COMPLICATION AND THE FORTUITIES OF NATURE.

This plan of government is the means of accomplishing several most important purposes.

(1.) *It gives a variety to the works of God.* It is conceivable, we have said, that all nature might have been so arranged that its operations, proceeding according to a few general laws, could have been readily anticipated. And there might, no doubt, in such a system, have been much that was grand and majestic, but there would have been at the same time a reigning sameness and monotony. There could have been no field for the imagination and fancy to sport in, no object to call forth feelings of wonder and surprise. The future and the past, the heavens above and the earth around us, would have been as one vast uninteresting plain stretching out before and behind, on the right hand and on the left, without a height on which the eye might rest, or inviting us to ascend, that from its top we might descry new wonders. Man would not have been able to lose himself in a delightful mixture of hill and valley, of light and shadow, of sunshine and gloom ; nor to employ himself in unfolding half-concealed beauties, and diving into ever-opening grandeur and magnificence. "Eleusis," says Seneca, "reserves something for the second visit of the worshipper ; so, too, nature does not at once disclose all her mysteries." But in such a scheme there would have been little room for the discovery of developing properties, of new combinations, and unexpected scenes bursting on the view. The objects presented in nature would have left the same impression on the mind as the Egyptian architecture and sculpture, as the stupendous pyramid and the fixed gaze of the Sphinx, by one glance at which you see all that you ever can see. We should have contemplated these laws ever recurring, with much the same feelings as we look on a few gigantic wheels running their perpetual rounds with awful and irresistible power, and wearying the eye that gazes upon them. As soon as these obvious laws had been discovered, all scientific investigation must have ceased, because all has been discovered that ever can be discovered. Every event would have been anticipated before it happened ; or rather the mind, wearied with sameness, would have ceased to anticipate the future, since that future could present nothing which had not been seen before. Persons naturally of the most ardent curiosity, and quickest apprehension, would, in such a state of things, have hastened to give themselves up to that abstraction which is reckoned so meritorious in eastern countries. But we find that these evils are avoided, and nature so far adapted to the constitution of man, by its laws being very numerous and diversified.

(2.) It is by this property of the Divine government that God *brings to pass each of his purposes, and makes general laws accomplish individual ends.* He has so distributed and arranged material substances that their laws now check and restrain, and now assist and strengthen each other. By this means he varies the dread uniformity of natural laws, and arrests at the proper time the prejudicial effects which would follow from their unbending mode of operation. We have said that we are not jealous of the discovery of law in the government of God, but it is because we have marked how law is made to operate. We would be as jealous of law as any man can be, if it acted as some represent it—we would be as jealous of it as of mere brute force under no control. We are not jealous of the introduction and widest extension of general laws; for in their harmonious adjustment, they acquire a plastic power which enables them to fulfil each of the purposes of an all-wise God. While the fixed nature of the laws gives to providence its firmness, the immense number and nice adaptation of these laws, like the innumerable rings of a coat-of-mail, give to it its flexibility, whereby it fits in to the shape and posture of every individual man.

A vessel is launched upon the ocean, fitted, so far as human sagacity can discover, to reach its destination. But when it has reached a particular place, a great rarefaction of the air is produced by heat in a particular region of the world; the wind rushes in to fill up the vacuum, lashes the ocean into fury, bears down upon the vessel, and hurrying it furiously along, dashes it upon a rock which is in the way, and scatters the whole crew upon the wide waste of waters. The greater number perish; but some two or three are able to lay hold of portions of the floating wreck, and are borne to the rock, where they find refuge till another ship, opportunely passing by, picks them up, at the very time when they were ready to die of hunger. Now, it is surely conceivable that an all-wise and an omnipotent God might have every link in this long and complicated chain adjusted, with the special view of bringing about each of these ends—the drowning of some and the saving of others, after having designedly exposed them to danger. Nor in all this would there be any violation of the sequences of nature, nor any suspension of general laws; there is merely such a skilful disposition as to secure the special ends which God from the first contemplated.

(3.) By this means, too, he can *produce effects which could not have followed from the operation of the laws of nature acting singly.* By their combination or collision, results follow which, in respect of magnitude and rapidity, far transcend the power of any one property of matter. This instrument employed by God may be compared to the screw, which is a mechanical power as well as the lever, or rather it is a complicated set of levers; and corresponding to it, we have in the tortuous, yet nicely adjusted arrangements of God, a potent means of extracting what would otherwise be fixed, and of elevating what is depressed, and all for the convenience and comfort of man.

By this agency he can at one time increase, and at another time lessen or completely nullify, the spontaneous efforts of the fixed properties of matter. Now he can make the most powerful agents in nature—such as wind, and fire, and disease—coincide and co-operate to produce effects of such a tremendous magnitude as none of them separately could accomplish; and, again, he can arrest their influence by counteracting agencies, or rather by making them counteract each other. He can, for example, by a concurrence of natural laws, bring a person, who is in the enjoyment of health at present, to the very borders of death an hour or an instant hence; and he can, by a like means, suddenly restore the same, or another individual, to health, after he has been compelled to take a look into eternity. By the confluence of two or more streams, he can bring agencies of tremendous potency to bear upon the production of a given effect—such as a war, a pestilence, or a revolution; and, on the other hand, by drawing aside the stream into another channel, he can arrest, at any given instant, the awful effects that would otherwise follow from these agencies, and save an individual, a family, or a nation, from evils which seem ready to burst upon them.

Let it be observed that, in the method employed by God, he has not only the power which the separate agents are fitted to exercise, but he has a farther power derived from their skilful arrangement, as now they combine and co-operate, through a long series of years or ages, towards a given point, acquiring momentum as they move on, and again, as they come into collision, and burst with awful suddenness. Now we find causes which have been silently at work for ages, leading to a complete change in the manners, the customs, and character of a nation, or breaking out, where the channel in which they flow is full, in terrible convulsions, upturning society from its foundations. At other times, we find the wisest of human arrangements, and the results which mankind were anticipating, according to the laws of human probability, all dissipated and confounded, as by a spark falling among combustible materials. If the event had happened a moment sooner, or a moment later, no such effects would have followed; and the man of coldest heart, and most sophisticated head, is constrained to acknowledge that there has been a providence in that intervention at a crisis, which has changed the whole destiny of an individual or a community, of a nation or a continent.*

(4.) Nor let it be forgotten that by this means *human foresight is lessened, human power controlled, and man rendered dependent on his Maker.*

There are domains of nature in which man's foresight is considerably extended and accurate, and other domains in which it is very limited, or very dim and confused. Again, there are departments of nature in which man's influence is considerable, and others which lie altogether beyond his control, directly or indirectly. Now, on comparing these classes of objects, we find them to have a cross or converse relation to one another. Where man's foreknowledge is extensive, either he has no power, or his power is limited; and where his power might be exerted, his foresight is contracted. His power of anticipating distant consequences, or of prediction, is greatest in regard to astronomical movements, or great physical changes; and here the agents are beyond his control. His influence can be exercised over agents with which he is more nearly connected, as over his own bodily frame, and the animal and vegetable kingdoms; but here his foresight is restricted within very narrow limits. He can draw out an astronomical almanac for centuries to come, but he cannot tell in what state any one animate object that is dear to him may be on the morrow. He can tell in what position a satellite of Saturn will be a hundred years after this present time, but he cannot say in what state his bodily health may be an hour hence. *The objects within the range of man's foresight are placed beyond his power, while the objects within his power lie beyond his foresight.* In the one case, man's knowledge increases without an increase of his power; and in the other, his power is rendered ineffectual by his want of knowledge. By the one contrivance as by the other, while not shut out from knowledge on the one hand, nor precluded from activity on the other, he is yet, both in regard to his knowledge and activity, rendered dependent on the arrangements of heaven.

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* There was a great truth bodied forth, in an exaggerated form, in Leibnitz's doctrine of pre-established harmony. There are events having no connexion in the way of cause and effect, which are made to fit into each other, and act in unison, because of an arrangement at the original constitution of all things. The error of Leibnitz arose from his carrying out his monadical theory, and denying that there could not also be causal relations. "He could not hold that mind changes the laws of matter, or that matter could change the laws of mind." (Conformity of Faith and Reason.) There is a pre-established harmony, (1,) in natural agents being so constituted that they act causally on each other; and, (2,) in events not causally connected being made to concur and co-operate. The former of these was overlooked by Leibnitz. The two constitute the true doctrine of pre-established harmony.

We do not mean to undervalue the power which knowledge confers; but there are anticipations entertained in the present day on this subject, which are destined to meet with bitter disappointment. Knowledge must extend in one or other of two departments; either in departments of nature beyond man's reach, as in those investigated in astronomy and natural philosophy, or in departments more within his control, and which fall under chemistry and natural history, under physiology and political and social economy. But so far as knowledge increases in the former, it brings with it no efficient power, for the objects are beyond his influence. He cannot control the smallest satellite or aërolite in its course, nor direct any of the great physical agents of nature. No doubt, there are other natural objects within his reach—he can experiment on the chemical elements, and make new dispositions of the vegetable and animal worlds; but then, in regard to these agents of nature, his foreknowledge is very contracted; for they are so involved one with another, that it would require a superhuman sagacity from a knowledge of the laws to predict the actual results. Man can tell how fast the earth moves in its orbit; but his knowledge does not enable him to stay or hasten it in its course. He can experiment with the elements of the atmosphere; but he cannot tell how the wind may be blowing at the close of his experiment. He can reach the plants and animals around him, and so far modify them; but then the plant which he is training with such pains may die in the midst of his operations; and the animated being which he expects to help him may be carried off by disease when its aid is most required.

Knowledge is power; and why is it power? Because it imparts foresight, and foresight furnishes control. There is first knowledge, then foresight, and then action. But we see that there are barriers both to the foresight and to the action—barriers against which human pride may chafe and rage, but which it cannot break down. Where the foresight is large, the action is restrained; and where the field of action is wide, the foresight is confined. The confident expectations of the power likely to accrue from knowledge, could be realized only by the foresight ever imparting a power of action, and by the power of action having provided for it an available foresight. But there are limits to the one and to the other; where the one is enlarged, the other is confined; and where power is imparted in the one, it is counteracted by a corresponding weakness in the other. No doubt there is great room, as knowledge increases, at once for advancing foresight and action; but still there are necessary limits to both; and all that man may feel his dependence, alike in the one as in the other, on the government of God. Human sagacity and activity will both increase as the world grows older; but both the one and the other will find checks raised to humble them in their very extension. No man feels his impotence more than he who knows all the courses of the stars, and yet feels that he cannot influence them in the least degree; except it be the person who sees himself surrounded by agents which he can to some extent control, but which in a far higher degree control him, and disappoint by their unexpected movements his best laid schemes. The farther human knowledge penetrates, it discovers, with a painful sense of weakness, the more objects utterly beyond its control, and moving on in their own independent sphere. The greater human activity becomes, it complicates the more the relations of society, and the relations of man to the most capricious of the agents of nature; and the greater the power he exerts, he feels himself the more powerless in the grasp of a higher power. Increased knowledge should make him bow in deeper reverence before infinite knowledge; and his own augmented action cause him to acknowledge, in a deeper feeling of helplessness, the irresistible might of the action of the Almighty.

We are now in circumstances to discover the advantages arising from the mixture of uniformity and uncertainty in the operations of nature. Both serve most important ends in the government of God. The one renders nature steady and stable, the other active and accommodating. Without the certainty, man would waver as in a dream, and wander as in a trackless desert; without the unexpected changes, he would make his rounds like the gin-horse in its circuit, or the prisoner on his wheel. Were nature altogether capricious, man would likewise become altogether capricious, for he could have no motive to steadfast action; again, were nature altogether fixed, it would make man's character as cold and formal as itself. The recurrences of nature surround us by friends and familiar faces, and we feel that we can walk with security and composure in the scenes in which our Maker has placed us; the occurrences of nature, on the other hand, bring us into contact with new objects and strangers, and quicken our energies by means of the feelings of curiosity and astonishment which are awakened. The wisdom of God is seen alike in what he hath made fixed, and in what he hath left free. The regularity, when it is observed by man, is the means of his attaining knowledge, scientific and practical; while the events which we call accidental enable God to turn the projects of mankind as he pleases, towards the fulfilment of his own wise and mysterious ends. Without the uniformity, man would be absolutely helpless; without the contingencies, he would become proud and disdainful. If the progressions of nature induce us to cherish trust and confidence, its digressions constrain us to entertain a sense of dependence. By the one class of arrangements, man is made to feel security, and is prompted to that industry to which security gives scope; by the other, he is constrained to feel that he needs the blessing of heaven, and is led to pour out his soul to God in humble supplications. In the one, we see how all is arranged to suit our nature; and in the other, we discover that we are as dependent on God as if nothing had been fixed or determined: and so the one invites to praise, and the other to prayer. It is by the admirable union and blending of the two that man is encouraged to cherish a grateful confidence, and act upon it, while at the same time he is obliged to entertain a feeling of dependence, and humble himself before a higher power. Let it be added, that while the one shows how God would allure us to put confidence in himself, the other proves that he puts no confidence in us; and thus, while the one should incite to gratitude and love, the other should awe us into reverence and humility.

Nor is it a less beautiful provision of God that the uniformity and the contingency are alike under the direct control of God, by their both following from causes which he hath put in operation. The contingency has a respect to man and not to God, with whom it is certainty. Even in regard to the fortuities of life, men can cherish the confidence that they are under the control of infinite wisdom and goodness. They may seem light as gases or floating vapours; but, like them, wherever they go they are under central attraction, which keeps them in their places as necessary parts, as the elastic agents of the system.

(5.) It is by the twofold operation of these two grand powers *that society is made to move forward.* The one gives to society its statical, and the other its dynamical power. The uniform laws are like the orderly strata produced in the ancient geological world throughout long ages, and by the peaceful agency of water. The contingencies, again, may be compared to those upheavals which have been produced by boiling igneous matter pouring itself from the bowels of the earth, and raising the sediment of the ocean to become the peaks of the highest mountains. It seems as if society at large required, as individual men also require, the agency of both elements. Without the one all would be bare and rugged, and without the other all would be flat and tame. The result of both is existing society, with its high elevations towering over and sheltering its sequestered vales. The one, to vary our illustration, is the conservative, and the other the reforming principle in the constitution of the world. The one gives to it its equality and peace, and the other keeps it from stagnating and breeding corruption. The one is the centripetal, and the other the centrifugal force; and it is by their nice adjustment that the world moves along in its allotted sphere.

And let us mark how many of the great changes which have given life to society, have arisen not so much from the orderly and anticipated successions of events as from those that are unexpected and fortuitous. All great living movements have originated where mighty rivers rise, in the midst of ruggedness. No doubt, there must have been antecedent predisposing and heaven-appointed causes, just as the rains of heaven supply the materials, and the interior of the hills the channels, for the waters that gush out in the springs among the mountains; but in themselves they have leapt at once into existence, and dashed along in impetuous torrents; the opposition offered has lashed them into turbulence, but has not been able to stem their progress—nay, it may only have been the means of imparting to them a greater and more irresistible rapidity. Of this description have been almost all the great movements for good—religious, political, or social—which have stirred society. As these streams make progress, all opposition vanishes in the sense of the utter hopelessness of the effort to oppose them; and they at length sweep along amidst wide-spread fertility, which they enrich and adorn—would we had not to add, often without the purity and energy which once they had, and at last they lose all separate existence as they expand themselves, and are absorbed among other influences, as in a great circumambient ocean.

It is also curious to observe how, by an exquisitely balanced system of counterpoises, these two elements are rendered much the same in all ages of the world, at all stages of society, and in all grades of life. In the simpler states of society, as in the shepherd life, and among the lower and uneducated classes, there is less observation of the constancy of nature; but there is, at the same time, less exposure to sudden reverses, and the other changes produced by the complication of human relations. As society advances in civilisation, and men's views become more expanded, they observe more of the regularity of law, and acquire a greater power over the refractory agents of nature; but in the same proportion their points of contact with other and distant objects are multiplied, and as they become more independent in one respect, they become more dependent in others. The elevated classes of society have, no doubt, a larger prospect, but they are exposed to more dreadful storms than those who dwell in the quieter vales of human life; and when driven from their height, their fall is the greater, and, owing to the refinement of their minds, they feel it with infinitely greater acuteness. The event which the peasant regards as isolated, and refers to special miracle, is observed by the man of enlarged education to be one of a class, and connected with others happening in other parts of the world; but in the very circumstances which have led the latter to make this observation, he has enlarged the number of his connexions, and become dependent on objects which cannot, by any possibility, reach or touch the former. The express which brings to the man of reading and intelligence the notice of an earthquake which has visited some distant country, and by which he explains some partial shock felt near his dwelling, that so roused the superstitious fear of the cottager, also informs him of the failure of a crop in that particular country, to the great detriment of his trade, or announces the painful intelligence of the decease of a beloved son for whose welfare he has been toiling.

There are proud enthusiasts who conclude that, by advancing in knowledge and the useful arts, man will soon be able to command nature, and become independent of it. It is singular to observe how every mind paints a golden age for the future destinies of our world, and each mind colours that age with its own hues. The golden age of the philosopher is an anticipated period in which man shall be able to control all, and yet be controlled of none. But the philosopher forgets one most important element in his calculation—and that is, that in very proportion as society becomes more artificial, it becomes more reticulated, and the destinies of every one portion more connected with those of every other, and that the snapping of one link in this network may throw the whole into inextricable confusion. In short, both the regular and the contingent pervade nature, and we cannot free ourselves from the one or the other; and man, whether in his lesser or wider spheres, whether in the ruder or more civilized states of society, is made to fall in with very much the same proportion of both.

As entertaining this view of the perfection of the original constitution of all things, we see no advantage in calling in special interpositions of God acting without physical causes—always excepting the miracles employed to attest Divine revelation. Speaking of the ordinary providence of God, we believe that the fitting of the various parts of the machinery is so nice that there is no need of any interference with it. We believe in an original disposition of all things; we believe that in this disposition there is provided an interposition of one thing in reference to another, so as to produce the individual effects which God contemplates; but we are not required by philosophy nor religion to acknowledge, that there is subsequent interposition by God with the original dispositions and interpositions which he hath instituted. "This is, in fact, the great miracle of providence, that no miracles are needed to accomplish its purposes."*

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* Taylor's Nat. Hist. of Enthusiasm.

"God," says Leibnitz, "has provided everything, he has remedied everything, beforehand. There is in his works a harmony, a beauty, already pre-established. This opinion does not at all exclude the providence or the government of God. A true providence on the part of God demands a perfect foreknowledge; but it demands not only that he has foreseen everything, but also that he has provided for everything—otherwise he is deficient either of the wisdom to foresee or the power to provide." Samuel Clarke, in a controversy which he carried on with Leibnitz, urges that this view does not render the universe dependent on God, and so he argues that God interposes from time to time to set his works right. To this Leibnitz replies:—"That defect of our machines which renders them in need of repair, arises from the circumstance that they are not sufficiently dependent on the workman. Thus the dependence of nature upon God, so far from being the cause of this defect, is rather the cause why the defect does not exist, because it is dependent on a workman too perfect to make a work which needs to be repaired."*

We see no advantage to be gained to religion by insisting that the ordinary events in the common providence of God can have no second cause. Bacon, speaking on this subject, says,—"For certain it is that God worketh nothing in nature but by second causes; and if they would have it otherwise believed, it is mere imposture, as it were, in favour towards God, and nothing else but to offer to the Author of truth the unclean sacrifice of a lie. But farther, it is an assured truth, and a conclusion of experience, that a little or superficial knowledge of philosophy may incline the man to atheism, but a farther proceeding therein doth bring the mind back again to religion; for in the entrance of philosophy, when the second causes which are next unto the senses do offer themselves to the mind of man, if it dwell and stay there, it may induce some oblivion of the highest cause; but when a man passeth on farther, and seeth the dependence of causes and the works of Providence, then, according to the allegory of the poets, he will easily believe that the highest link of nature's chain must needs be tied to the foot of Jupiter's chair."†

There are some judicious remarks on this subject in Tucker's Light of Nature.‡ "Therefore, let not men condemn one another too hastily of impiety or superstition, for both are relative to the strength of each person's sight. The philosopher may entertain so high an opinion of infinite wisdom, as that upon the formation of a world it might provide for every event that is to happen during the whole period of its continuance; therefore he is not impious in asserting that all things since have gone on in the course of natural causes, for his idea of the first plan is so full as to leave no room for anything to be interposed. This the plain man cannot comprehend, the lines of his view being short; therefore he is not superstitious in imagining frequent interpositions, because without them he cannot understand a Providence at all. He may likewise find it impossible to conceive that every motion of matter and turn of volition should be calculated or foreseen; but supposes a watchful Providence continually attentive to the tendency of second causes, interposing every hour and day to correct the errors of chance, and secretly turning the springs of action the way that wisdom and goodness recommend. And he is excusable therein, if this be the best conception he can form; for it derogates not from his idea of the Divine wisdom and dominion to imagine that there should be room left in nature for chance, so long as there is a superintending power who can foresee the irregularities of chance, time enough to prevent them. Thus, how largely soever we may ascribe to interposition, or how much soever deduct therefrom to add to the disposing Providence, we cannot deny that every natural cause we see is an effect of some prior cause, impulse of impulse, and volition of motives and ideas suggested to the mind, therefore must refer all dispensations ultimately to the act of God; and as we cannot imagine him to act without knowing what he does, and what will result therefrom, we must conclude that act to proceed upon a plan and disposition of the causes, tending to produce the particular consequences following thereupon. The only difference between the man of common sense and the studious, is concerning the time when the disposition was made, which the one thinks a few days or a few minutes, the other many ages ago; the one frequent and occasional, the other rare and universal: but both acknowledge that nothing ever happens without the permission of one almighty and ever-vigilant Governor."

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* See Letters between Leibnitz and Clarke. † De Aug. Scien.

‡ Chap. on Providence.

SECT. III.—ON A GENERAL AND PARTICULAR PROVIDENCE.

There have been disputes among thinking minds in all ages as to whether the providence of God is general or particular. Philosophers, so called, have generally taken the former view, and divines the latter. There has been a wide difference between the views of these two parties, but there is no necessary antagonism between the doctrines themselves. The general providence of God, properly understood, reaches to the most particular and minute objects and events; and the particular providence of God becomes general by its embracing every particular.

Those who suppose that there is a general, but that there cannot be a particular providence, are limiting God by ideas derived from human weakness. The greatest of human minds, in contemplating important ends, are obliged to overlook many minor events falling out incidentally as they execute their plans. The legislator, for example, is sometimes under the necessity of disregarding the temporary misery which the changes introduced by him, and which are advantageous as a whole, may bring along with them. In short, in attending to the general, man must often overlook the particular. But we are not to suppose that an infinite God, infinite in his power, his wisdom, his resources, and present through all his works, is laid under any such inability to attend to particular events, because he is also superintending empires and worlds. The pains, if we may so speak, which God has taken to beautify every leaf and flower—nay, every weed that we trample under foot—the new beauties, unseen by the naked eye, which the microscope discloses in the vegetable kingdoms, and the beautiful organization of the insect world—all show that the greatness of God is peculiarly seen in the care which he takes of objects the most minute.

On the other hand, they take a most unworthy view of the Divine character who conclude that his attention is directed exclusively to a few favourite objects, in which they themselves possibly feel a special interest. Here, again, we discover the tendency of mankind to measure Deity by standards derived from human infirmity. It not unfrequently happens that the minute man, who manages with care and kindness his own affairs and those of his family, has no very enlarged views or feelings of general philanthropy. Taking such a model as this, there are piously disposed minds who would make God "altogether such an one as themselves;" and conceiving it to be impossible for him, in the attention which he must pay to certain objects, to provide for the wants of all his creatures, they would praise him, because, in the exercise of what would truly be a weak favouritism, he is supposed to pass by and disregard the whole world in the extraordinary care which he takes of persons who are the special objects of his regards.

In the government of this world, the individual is not lost in the general on the one hand, nor is the general neglected in the attention to the individual on the other hand. No creature, no object, however insignificant, has been overlooked. The general includes every individual, which finds accordingly its appropriate place. Provision has been made for all and for each in the grand system of the universe.

The particular method which God employs in accomplishing these ends, apparently inconsistent, has already been pointed out. It is not so much by means of those laws on which the minds of the votaries of science are prone to dwell, as by their all-wise and skilful combination for the production of the particular ends which God designs. Philosophers have looked too exclusively to these general laws; and in doing so, have been able to detect few traces of a special providence. On the other hand, the person whose heart prompts him to observe the ways of his Creator, has ever fondly dwelt on those cross arrangements, many of them apparently accidental, by which God makes provision for the wants of his creatures, and nicely adapts his dispensations to their state and character.

> "Think we, like some weak prince, the Eternal Cause
> Prone for his favourites to reverse his laws?
> Shall burning Etna, if a sage requires,
> Forget to thunder, and recall her fires;
> On air or sea new motions be imprest,
> Oh, blameless Bethel, to relieve thy breast;
> When the loose mountain trembles from on high,
> Shall gravitation cease if you go by?"—*Essay on Man.*

Pope has in these few lines stated, in his usual compact and sententious manner, what is commonly called the philosophic view of providence. It is a system far enough from the surface to make it appear deep, but does not go sufficiently far down to reach the foundation. In some respects, it affords a worse basis on which to raise a superstructure than the surface patent to all would have done; and it is utterly insecure, because it has not gone down to the rock. It has just a sufficient amount of truth to be plausible. And so far as advanced merely with the view of keeping us from committing foolish actions, in the hope that God will interpose to preserve us from the natural consequences, so far as it is used for the purpose of preventing persons from tempting Providence, (to use the language of a very different school,) it may be made as useful as it is unquestionably sound. But if meant, as it obviously is, to keep us from putting confidence in Divine providence, and feeling our close and immediate dependence upon it, it cannot be condemned in language sufficiently strong: for it would rob many of some of their deepest and most abiding consolations, and foster in others a spirit of pride and rebellion. Nor is it difficult to detect the error which lurks beneath a superficial plausibility. We expect not the Eternal to change his laws; but it is because they have been so wisely arranged that they do not need to be changed—arranged so as to accomplish all and each of his purposes. We do not expect Etna to recall her fires when a sage is near; or the air and ocean to acquire new motions to preserve a saint from danger; for if the sage has been contending with the laws which he professes to observe, or if the saint has been despising what he should regard as the "ordinances of heaven," it may be the will of God that these very powers should be the means of destroying him. But should these individuals not be rushing recklessly against the known laws of heaven, or should it be the will of God to preserve them, it will be found that provision has been made for their escape; and that not through the powers of nature disobeying their own laws, but through other powers in nature opportunely interposing to stop, to turn aside, or otherwise to modify their operation. The volcano may burst, the tempest may rage, and the cliff may fall, an instant before or an instant after the time when these events might have been followed with fatal consequences; or some passing impulse of feeling may have hurried the individual away; or some other agent of nature may have hastened to shelter or defend him, and all by a special arrangement intended by God from the very beginning.

Living as we do under such a system, we are not at liberty to draw distinctions, and to represent God as taking charge of and ordaining some events, but not other events or all events. No such distinction should be drawn; no such distinction can be drawn. As we make the attempt, we find that no line can be described which will divide the two territories which we would separate.

Balbus the Stoic, in Cicero *De Naturâ Deorum*, quoting from, or referring to, a line in Euripides, says, " Magna dii curant, parva negligunt," and adds, " Magnis autem viris prosperè eveniunt semper omnes res." But every one sees that the difference between great and small is but a difference of degree of comparison; and no one can point out the place where the one ends and the other begins, or arrange actual events under so loose a classification. Every one knows, too, that great events often depend on events which are in themselves insignificant; and if small events were above or beneath God's control, great events would soon get beyond his dominion.

In modern times, many attempts have been made to draw the line of distinction, but always in the very loosest manner. Is it said we may discover God in those events which have a cause, but not in those which have no cause? The answer is at hand, in the fact now acknowledged, that every event has a cause. Or is it rather hinted that the distinction lies in this, that the cause of the one event is known, and of the other unknown? This view lands us in the absurdity of making man's knowledge, which varies in the case of individuals and ages in the world's history, the measure or test of the presence of Deity. Some, again, would exclude God wherever a general law or a second cause can be detected—forgetting that these laws or causes are ordained by God, and the special expression of his will. Others would confine his intentions to the immediate results of general laws, and exclude him from those apparent fortuities which result from the concurrence or collision of the general properties of matter; but in doing so, they forget that individual incidents, as well as general phenomena, proceed from the powers of nature which God hath put in operation, and from the adjustments which he hath instituted. We cannot legitimately draw such a distinction as would admit the presence of God in certain effects which flow more directly from general laws, and exclude him from other events that follow as certainly, though it may be in a more indirect and devious manner, from the very same laws. We cannot say of any one event, this is the mere scaffolding, and of this other, it is the building—for the very scaffolding is part of the building. The mean is an end in God's works; and the end is a mean to something farther. In short, we cannot draw distinctions which do not exist in nature. Every trial that is made will shew that the attempt is vain. The inevitable practical result of drawing such a distinction is manifest. Mankind would ascribe to God only what they pleased, and this would turn out to be what suited their humour; and they would ascribe to fortune, to fate, or to law, everything else in which they did not wish to discover the presence of God. Under such a system faith would be the servant, and not, as it ought, the master of human feeling. If we see God in any one part of his works, we must, for a like reason, see him in every other part. If we exclude him from any one part, we must, for a like reason, exclude him from all.

The conclusion is forced upon us, that we are to see God in all events, even in those that may seem most trifling and minute. The saying commends itself to enlightened reason, as well as to faith and feeling, "A sparrow cannot fall to the ground without him." "The very hairs of our head are all numbered."

The half-learned man is apt to laugh at the simple faith of the clown or savage, who tells us that rain comes from God. The former, it seems, has discovered that it is the product of certain laws of air, water, and electricity. But truly the peasant is the more enlightened of the two, for he has discovered the main cause, and the real actor; while the other has found only the second cause, and the mere instrument. It is as if a friend were to send us a gift of ingenious and beautiful workmanship, and just as our gratitude was beginning to rise to the donor, some bystander were to endeavour to damp it all, by telling us that the gift is the product of certain machinery which he had seen. "I call," says Sir Thomas Browne, "the effects of nature the works of God, whose hand and instrument she only is; and therefore to ascribe his actions unto her is to devolve the honour of the principal agent upon the instrument, which if with reason we may do, then let our hammers rise up and boast that they have built our houses, and our pen receive the honour of our writings."* It is surely possible for us so to expand our minds as to discover both the agent and the instrument—to discover the goodness of God in the blessing sent, and the wisdom of God in the means, so adapted to our state, through which the blessing comes.

It is instructive to observe how the views of the peasant and philosopher meet and harmonize at this point. The savage, when guided by faith, sees God in every circumstance. Overlooking all instrumental causes, he ascribes every event to the god whom he worships. The half-educated man is taught to observe, that certain events have second causes; and in regard to these, he is tempted to feel that it is not needful to call in the Divine power to account for them. As such science increases, one portion of God's works after another is taken from under his dominion; and simple faith is being superseded by a widening scepticism. But as science makes further progress, it discovers that all the affairs of the world proceed from causes that are fixed, and so concatenated, that if we exclude God from any of his works, we must, on the same ground, exclude him from them all; and that if we admit him in any case, we are necessitated to admit him in every case. The enlightened philosopher, who has penetrated farthest into the mysteries of nature, arrives at last at the conclusion with which the believing savage and peasant set out, that God is to be seen in the rain, in the sunshine, and in every occurrence.

The course through which society passes is that through which many a youth has to run before he reaches a settled belief. Trained in a pious household, he was led to see the hand of God in every object which presented itself to his eye; till, on being initiated in a secular and ill-understood science, he feels as if he might separate and remove certain portions of nature from the direct power of God. The true cure for the evils which proceed from a half learning is to be found in a thorough learning. When this youth has reached a greater height, the error proceeding from imperfect glimpses will disappear. The views which he caught in climbing the hill of science were more partial and confused than those which he obtained while standing on the plain below; and it is not till he reaches the summit, and the whole scene stretches out beneath him, that they become clear and comprehensive.

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* Religio Medici, Sect. 16.

Human science contemplated under this aspect is a circle; as we go round it, we obtain many pleasant and instructive views; but we arrive at last at the point at which we set out, or should have set out—at simple faith in an all-acting God.

Illustrative Note (e.)—COMBE'S CONSTITUTION OF MAN.

This work has had so extensive a circulation in this country and in America, that it demands a passing notice. It is a congelation, and all by natural law, of a cold and secular age, which it has by reaction rendered still more frigid. In examining it, we shall not enter upon the consideration of the phrenology which the author has used to explain his theory, for, as he remarks himself, the practical value of the views which he unfolds does not depend on phrenology; and he intimates that the same views could be expounded, though not so effectually, upon another system.

We are quite willing to admit that there are some important truths set forth in this treatise. This world is governed by what he calls natural, organic, and moral laws. The classification is perhaps not very philosophically worded—for surely organic laws are also natural laws; and when we speak of moral laws, we should remember that they are totally different from physical laws. But disregarding this, we do reckon it as of some importance, that mankind should be reminded that this world is governed by laws, and that it is their duty to study these laws, and accommodate themselves to them. His book, we doubt not, is so far fitted to make men observant and prudent, and may have checked, in some cases, that rashness among the young, and over-exertion among the eager and ambitious, which have produced such fatal effects. In short, he has given a prominence to certain points which common sense and common prudence were ever observing, and not unfrequently magnifying far beyond their real importance, but which religion and enthusiasm were sometimes tempted to overlook in an eagerness to attain their glorious ends. He has also pointed out several important and deeply interesting relations between the constitution of the world and the constitution of man.

We feel now, however, as if we had exhausted all the praise which can be bestowed upon this treatise, the actual truth set forth in which has been used as a means of conveying not a little error, as food is commonly employed in the administering of poison. He carries out his very limited and partial views as if they were the whole truth, and has committed several inexcusable errors, and drawn conclusions which would go far to sap the foundations of a living religion. Let us notice some of the more glaring defects of the work.

First, all but phrenologists will doubt whether he has given a correct enumeration of those laws which mankind are required to observe; and even the higher class of phrenologists will reckon the laws which he so magnifies as truly not the most important, and as not having had their proper relative importance attached to them.

Secondly, he has completely overlooked the ambiguity which lurks in the word "law," and used it in all the diverse senses of which it is capable, passing unconsciously from the one to the other, and predicating of a law in one sense what is true of it only in another. Sometimes he means by it a property of matter, sometimes a cause requiring the adjustment of two or more substances to each other; at other times a general fact originating in the adjustment of causes, and anon a moral precept enjoined by God. With the greatest coolness and self-complacency, he uses the word "law' in all these senses, without ever dreaming that there is any difference between them; constantly asserting of a general fact what is true only of a property of matter, and of a physical cause what holds good only of a moral precept.

Thirdly—and this is his most inexcusable oversight—he overlooks altogether that adjustment of natural laws to each other, whereby the results are often of the most complicated character, and such that they cannot be anticipated by human foresight. While all events are occurring according to the law of cause and effect, they are not happening in that orderly and regular manner which we call a general law. On the contrary, many events are falling out in an accidental unforeseen manner, which is fitted to make man feel his helplessness. The author, in disregarding this circumstance, this complication of the arrangements of Providence, and the consequent dependence of man, has overlooked a principle in the Divine government as important as that method of general laws on which his attention has been exclusively fixed.

Fourthly, and as following from the oversight last mentioned, he has neglected to observe that mankind are as dependent on the arrangements of Providence as they are on natural and organic laws. Hence the efficacy of prayer to bring an answer is boldly denied, and no encouragement given to faith, to a sense of dependence, and to other graces, such as faith, submission, meekness, and patience, so strongly recommended by religion under all its beneficent forms, and so becoming on the part of man in the state in which he is at present placed.

Fifthly, he robs the sufferer of everything fitted to impart true consolation. A poor widow has her house burned, or has lost her husband in consequence of the shipwreck of his vessel; and all the comfort that this philosopher has to offer is, that it is a good thing that fire burns and that winds blow. He comes to her and says, "Would you have fire not to burn? then remember, if it does not burn it cannot warm you." "Would you have winds not to blow? then bear in mind that the air will become so stagnant that you cannot breathe it." Whatever the prudent and worldly may say to such a system, when his plans are all prospering, and he is hymning an anthem of praise to his own wisdom, the sufferer feels that he needs to be told of an overruling Providence which has appointed that particular event for good, and of a living God who feels for the sorrows to which his creatures are exposed.

Sixthly, he anticipates for individuals and communities an unreasonable extent of benefit to be secured by the mere observation of general laws. It is amusing to notice the wrath (all cool though he usually be) into which he works himself when blaming mankind for not observing these laws, and the constant predictions which he is uttering about their producing an Elysian perfection, when they shall have become so wise as to allow phrenology to instruct them. Surely there must be something wrong in human nature when it has so neglected these laws for six thousand years, is the reflection which rises up in our minds on reading his language; and is there not a risk, we are inclined to whisper in his ear, that this evil nature may abide with us in time to come, and disappoint some of his brightest expectations? Is there not a risk, too, that if men by natural laws could do all which Combe supposes, they might be tempted to abuse their power? The wise will rejoice that there is such a system of checks in the providence of God that man is often rendered helpless, and is at all times dependent; for they see that such is the selfishness of the race, and such the power of their lower propensities, that if they could do more by natural laws, the evils which abound in society would be fearfully increased. We, too, look for the dawn of a brighter era in our earth's history; but we look for it to the providence of God, and the transforming power of his Spirit.

These objections to his views of natural and organic laws are altogether independent of those which might be brought against his theory of "moral law," the examination of which would cause us to anticipate the ethical inquiries to be afterwards instituted. It is the less needful to examine his moral theory, from the circumstance that there is nothing in it different from other meagre ethical systems, except it be, that he so often classes "moral" with "natural" law, and confounds things which the mere tyro in science has been taught to separate.

We have so far noticed this treatise, because there is an air of extraordinary wisdom about it, which has made many to regard it as superlatively profound. The author has seen and endeavoured to count the nice wheels of the machine, but has overlooked their relation to one another, and the moving power by which they have been set in motion. His views are about as profound as those of a factory-girl, explaining, with looks of mysterious wisdom, to her companion who has just entered the work, the movements of some of the straps or wheels, telling her how to use them, and pointing out the danger of not attending to them. The information is all very good and useful, provided always that it be not hinted, that in knowing the motion of these few wheels, we know all about the machine, its end, and its mode of operation.

SECT. IV.—METHOD OF INTERPRETING THE DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

Providence is no doubt a lesson-book, spread out before us that we may read it. Yet it is a difficult and mysterious book There are persons who talk of the certainty of nature, in contradistinction to what they are pleased to call the obscurity of the Scriptures. And, no doubt, the volume of inspiration has its mysteries; for, as Robert Hall remarks, "a religion without its mystery would be a temple without its God;" but, most assuredly, the volume of Providence is as much more difficult of interpretation than the volume of the Word, as hieroglyphical writing is than alphabetical.

How is the providence of God to be interpreted? This general question resolves itself into three particular ones, which are often confounded, but which ought to be carefully separated:—To what extent is God to be seen in the works of nature? When may we discover an intended connexion between one part of God's works and another? When may we discover the particular design of a given dispensation?

I. To WHAT EXTENT IS GOD TO BE SEEN IN THE WORKS OF NATURE?—To this question a clear and decisive answer can be given. He is to be seen in every work of nature and event of providence.

Had God confined himself to the blind operation of general laws, it might have been difficult to determine as to any given event, whether it was one of the objects contemplated as desirable to be produced when the law was fixed, or whether it is merely one of its incidental effects. But in consequence of the infinitely wise adjustment of these laws, we can confidently say of every event that happens, that it was contemplated and intended in the providence of God. Almost all the mistakes into which mankind have fallen, in regard to the interpretation of providence, have arisen from not carrying out this principle thoroughly.

There are persons who willingly ascribe certain events to God, but hand over others to chance. Now there are senses in which we may allowably use the word chance; this we shall show forthwith. But in respect of production and purpose, there is, there can be, no such thing as chance. In this sense the word is simply expressive of our ignorance. An accidental event is one of which we may not be able to discover the cause or the purpose. But while man cannot discover the precise cause, yet he knows that there is a cause, and while the design may be concealed, yet there is most assuredly a purpose contemplated; and we may rest assured that the cause has been appointed to produce this particular effect, and this effect to serve the specific purpose. The wisdom of God is peculiarly seen in his constituting a large class of events as contingent in the view of man; but instead of being independent of God, it is specially by these events that he fulfils his own purposes, and becomes truly the governor of his own world.

Fleeing to an opposite extreme, there are persons who *there* fall into precisely the same error. They feel, and talk, and write, as if it was not necessary to discover the presence of God in those events which occur according to a general law. By referring an event to such a law, they feel as if they had placed it out of the special dominion of God. We cannot find language strong enough to express our indignation against those who neglect to see God in his works, because they are done in a regular manner. Whatever the parties may profess, their system is real atheism. Nor is our indignation lessened when we find the errors of the infidel countenanced by those who affect to be the defenders of religion. According to the doctrine of parties now referred to, God is to be *specially* seen in those occurrences of which the cause is unknown. Little attention is paid by them to those dealings and dispensations of God, of which the physical cause is obvious. These, it is thought, may be ascribed to nature, or divided between God and nature, and may be allowed to pass away without its being needful seriously to weigh them and improve them. But wherever there is mystery, wherever the instrumental causes are so remote or so complicated that they cannot be detected, *there*, it is supposed, is the place at which God peculiarly works. We repudiate this distinction as of a most perilous character. We believe that the common events of providence have a physical cause; but we believe, at the same time, that this circumstance does not render them less the work of God. In some cases the cause is obvious, and in others more recondite; but in the one class as in the other we are to discover the operation of Deity. Let us adopt an opposite principle, and we are landed in the most inexplicable confusion; and ignorance may, with truth, be represented as the mother of devotion, for our religion must be in proportion to our ignorance. An ignorant man can discover no physical cause of an occurrence, and so he must ascribe it to God; but another man has detected a producing cause in nature, and so needs to take no notice of a higher power. According to this system, an event is ascribed, in one age to God, and in a more advanced age to nature. It follows that ignorant countries must be the most pious, and that enlightened nations are necessitated to be infidel in proportion to their progress in science. Religion, or rather superstition, is not aware how effectually it is playing into the hands of atheism by the sanction which it gives to such a principle—a principle which would make man's religion decrease as his knowledge of physical nature is augmented. Yet it is this narrow and superstitious sentiment which produces all that jealousy of the discovery of law, which is still so common among some who profess to be religious. The jealousies which they entertain, and the principles which they lay down, furnish the infidel with the only plausible arguments which he can use in his attempt to banish God from his works.

In dropping the principle for which we are contending, we fall into errors of all sorts and shapes. Thus there are some who distinguish between great events and great men, put under the special care of God, and common events left to shift for themselves as best they can. But it is a low and unworthy, and, to the mass of mankind, a most uncomfortable view which is given of our common Ruler, when he is spoken of as caring merely for persons and occurrences regarded by the world as great. The majority of men cannot be great men, nor are they called to transact great events—and are they to be compelled to consider themselves as overlooked in the system of providence because high talents or wide spheres of usefulness have not been allotted to them? Truly it is no consolation to the poor man, under his privations, to inform him that he has been overlooked in the care taken of individuals and events regarded as of more importance. It is indeed a mockery of the individual exposed to heavy affliction, to tell him that God regulates all matters of moment, but has thought it unnecessary to make provision for his particular case. The only view which will elevate, cheer, and gladden the great body of mankind, in all their various difficulties and trials, is that which pictures God as a father who takes charge of all his creatures without exception, and makes provision for each according to his state and circumstances.

Discard the principle of God's universal presence in all events, and we fall under the guidance of mere feeling and caprice. Thus the superstitious man sees God only in those events which excite or startle the mind. He discovers Him in the storm, but not in the sunshine; in the hurricane, but not in the calm; in the disease which prostrates the body, but not in the health which so long supported it; in short, in those things, and in those things only, which call forth feelings of curiosity and wonder, astonishment and fear.

The natural recoil from superstition is scepticism; and when we exclude God from certain portions of his works, the atheist pursues us, and shows that from a like reason we should exclude him from all others. When Diagoras, who was reputed an atheist, came to Samothrace, some one pointed out to him the votive tablets erected by those who had escaped the perils of the ocean, and thus addressed him:—"Thou who thinkest that the gods neglect human affairs, do you not observe, from so many painted tablets, how many by their vows have testified that they have escaped the power of the tempest, and arrived in safety in this harbour?" "It happens thus," was the reply,—"they erect no tablets who have suffered shipwreck and perished in the sea."* All who would confine the power of God to mere deliverances from dangers created by the laws of nature—that is, by the laws of God—expose themselves to similar objections pertinent or impertinent; nor can scepticism be successfully resisted except by putting the whole of nature under the dominion of its Governor.

No doubt this doctrine of a universal providence may be abused, but it can be abused only by departing from it. There are minds that will fix on certain events, and those of the most trivial nature, and build on them the most unworthy conceptions of the Divine character. But it is against these narrow views that the doctrine of a universal providence, including every particular, provides the most effectual remedy, by calling upon us to extend our view and embrace all particulars. The doctrine which we are now defending condemns alike those who see God only in great events, and those who see him only in those that are minute, and demands that we discover him in both, and give to both their due place and importance. "In minds of a puny form," says Isaac Taylor, "whose enthusiasm is commonly mingled with some degree of abject superstition, the doctrine of a particular providence is liable to be degraded by habitual association with trivial and sordid solicitudes." "The fault in those instances does not consist in an error of opinion, as if even the most trivial events were not, equally with the most considerable, under the Divine management; but it is a perversion and degradation of feeling, which allows the mind to be occupied with whatever is frivolous, to the exclusion of whatever is important."†

The events of providence appear to us very much like the letters thrown into a post-bag, and this parcel then sent forth on its destination. The person who carries it,—

——"Messenger of joy
Perhaps to thousands, and of grief to some,
To him indifferent whether grief or joy,"—

onward he moves, quite unconcerned as to the nature of the communications he bears, or the effects produced by them. And when we look into that repository, it may seem as if its contents were in inextricable confusion, and we wonder how the letters, parcels, money, periodicals, should ever reach their individual destinations. But then every letter has its special address inscribed upon it—it has the name and residence of the party, and so it shall in due time fall into his hands, and bring its proper intelligence. And what different purposes do these letters fulfil —what varied emotions do they excite! This declares that friends are in health and prospering—this other is the bearer of the news of wealth, or of the wealth itself—this third tells of some crushing disappointment, and quenches long-cherished hopes by the tidings of the utter failure of deep-planned schemes —while this fourth, with sable symbols, announces to the wife that she is a widow, or to the parent that he is childless, or to the child fondly cherished by the mother that he is an orphan. It is a kind of picture of the movements of Providence. What a crowd of events huddled together, and apparently confused, does it carry along with it! Very diverse are the objects bound up in that bundle, very varied are the emotions which they are to excite when opened up; yet how coolly and systematically does the vehicle proceed on its way! Neither the joy nor the sorrow which it produces causes it to linger an instant in its course. But meanwhile every occurrence, or bundle of occurrences, is let out at its proper place. Each has a name inscribed upon it, each has a place to which it is addressed. Each, too, has a message to carry, and a purpose to fulfil. Some inspire hope or joy, others raise only fear and sorrow. The events which are unfolded by the same course of things, and which fall out the same day, bring gladness to one, and land another in deepest distress. On the occurrence of the same event you perceive one weeping and another rejoicing. Some of the dispensations are observed to propagate prosperity through a whole community. And these others, so black and dismal, and of which so many arrive at the same time, carry, as they are scattered, gloom into the abodes of thousands. But amid all this seeming confusion, every separate event has its separate destination. If pestilence has only some one person devoted to it in a city or community, that person it will assuredly find out, and execute the judgment of heaven upon him. If there be a thousand persons allotted to it in a district, it will not allow one of the thousand to escape. If, among the numbers who are dying, there be one regarding whom it has no commission to seize upon him, that individual must remain untouched. "A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee." It has a commission, and will execute it; but then it cannot go beyond its commission. And in regard to every person to whom the event comes, it has a special end to accomplish; and it bears a special message, if he will but read it and attend to it.

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* Cic. De Nat. Deor., iii. 37.

† Nat. Hist. of Enthusiasm.

II. IN WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES MAY WE DISCOVER AN INTENDED CONNEXION BETWEEN ONE PART OF GOD'S WORKS AND ANOTHER?

We have said, that in the sense of being causeless or purposeless, no event happens by chance. But still there are two legitimate senses in which the word chance may be employed. First, it may be applied to an event of which the mode of production or the design is undiscoverable by us. Thus understood, many events may be described as accidental: and we have seen that great and beneficent purposes are served by the arrangement which admits of such. But there is a second sense, in which we may admit the existence of chance, and it is with this that we have now to do. While all events have a connexion with their immediate physical cause, and also with God as their ultimate author, it does not follow that every event has an intended connexion with every other.* There cannot be such a thing as casual occurrences, but there may be, and often are, such things as casual concurrences. There may be conjunctions of events in respect of time or place, which are purely accidental, and this while the events themselves may all be traced to God. An eclipse of the sun and a devastating famine may happen about the same time; and true religion will teach us to refer both to God, but it does not follow that the two have a connexion with each other. It is one thing to declare that every event is connected with God as its author, and quite another to affirm that it is designedly related to every other which may be contiguous to it. But are we never at liberty to discover a correlation between two events?

It is evident that there are such designed correspondences of one event to another. The deepest thinkers have been prone to dive into these profundities. "In my opinion," says Davy,* "profound minds are the most likely to think lightly of the resources of human reason, and it is the pert superficial thinker who is generally strongest in every kind of unbelief. The deep philosopher sees chains of causes and effects so wonderfully and strangely linked together, that he is usually the last person to decide upon the impossibility of any two series of events being independent of each other; and in science, so many natural miracles, as it were, have been brought to light, such as the fall of stones from meteors in the atmosphere, the disarming a thunder-cloud by a metallic point, the production of fire from ice by a metal white as silver, and the referring certain laws of motion of the sea to the moon—that the physical inquirer is seldom disposed to assert confidently on any abstruse subject belonging to the order of natural things, and still less so on those relating to the more mysterious relations of moral events and intellectual natures."

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* See Mill's Logic, B. iii. c. xvii. This subject will be found farther explicated by the author in his work on the combined order and adaptation in the universe.

But while there is abundant room in the method of Providence for wonderful conjunctions and recurrences intended by God, we must on that very account be the more on our guard against that mystical and speculative spirit which would multiply them without evidence. The intricacy of God's procedure, while it admits of his appointing mysterious connexions between events, also furnishes a field in which human fancy and conjecture will delight to sport. The human spirit has often wandered in the mazes of Divine providence without a pathway to keep it in the right direction, and invented correspondences and analogies which were never thought of by the Creator of the world. The arts of divination, necromancy, and astrology, have betaken themselves to these high and misty regions, whence it has been most difficult to dislodge them.

Are there no rules to guide us in determining when a conjunction is intended, and when it is casual? The following may at once guide and restrain.

First, we may regard the connexion as intended, whenever we can discover a *natural* tie, that is, a tie in the system of causes and laws which God hath appointed. We say laws as well as causes; for, from reasons already explained, there may be general laws of nature observed when the causes are utterly unknown. All events connected causally, and all events connected by an observable invariable law, may be held as joined by the appointment of God. It is by the observation of the bonds of union, as we have seen, that the mind acquires its practical foresight and scientific knowledge. There are such correspondences strewn all around us, that we may observe them and act upon them.

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* Salmonia.

Secondly, we may, upon satisfactory evidence, believe in such conjunctions as intended, when we discover a *moral* tie. We hold the moral law to be as much, to say the least of it, the appointment of God as any natural law. As there are harmonies pre-established between one natural law and another, so there may be, so there are, harmonies between the moral law and the physical laws. God has so ordered his physical government, that it is made in various ways to support his moral government, both in the way of encouraging that which is good and beneficent, and arresting and punishing that which is evil. Now, whenever we can discover such a moral tie, we may, always in the exercise of common sense and a sound judgment, believe in intended coincidences when supported by a sufficient induction of facts.

Thirdly, we may, on the same terms, believe in such correspondences when we can discover a *religious* tie. For just as we hold man to be a physical and a moral, so we also hold him to be a religious agent. And as there are connexions between the physical and the physical, and between the physical and the moral, so there may also be connexions between the physical and the religious. As the physical government of God is so arranged as to uphold the moral ends of God, it may be also so arranged as to provide an answer to prayer, to order the destinies of the pious in all faithfulness and love, and to help on the true religion in its progress towards universality. The heaving of the waves, in correspondence with the motions of the moon, is not more certain than the movements of earthly events in correspondence with heavenly influences.

He who faithfully follows out these principles, shall be kept by them, on the one hand, from that spirit of ungodliness which fails to detect the presence and purposes of God in the dispensations of his providence, and on the other hand, from that spirit of uncharitable partisanship, which would call down fire from heaven upon every supposed offender. If, for example, some form of pestilence, such as cholera, visits a district, they will lead us first to see the hand of God in it, and secondly, to inquire whether it may not have been a relation to some particular evil in the community; and as we discover how it falls most severely upon the intemperate, and those who consort in the haunts of pollution, they will conduct us to the conclusion, that it is specially directed against the social evils among us, and that it is allowed to travel beyond its particular walk, and to attack the comfortable and the wealthy, in order to shew them that they are so far responsible for the moral diseases in the midst of them, and that the flames must spread if they are not extinguished. Or suppose that disease has entered our own dwelling, these same principles will lead us, as in the previous case, first to see God in the occurrence, and then to inquire what reference it can have to our moral and religious state. In directing us to such practical inquiries, they will save us from a vast amount of loose speculations and profitless applications, which go out in uncharitable references towards others, and come back with no lessons of humility to ourselves.

Guided by these principles, and guarded by sound sense, the inquiring mind will discover designed combinations, many and wonderful, between the various events of Divine providence. Read in the spirit of faith, striking relations will everywhere manifest themselves. What singular unions of two streams at the proper place to help on the exertions of the great and good! What curious intersections of cords to catch the wicked as in a net, when they are prowling as wild beasts! By strange but most apposite correspondences, human strength, when set against the will of God, is made to waste away under his indignation burning against it, as, in heathen story, Meleager wasted away as the stick burned which his mother held in the fire. A consistency not visible at first sight may thus be traced throughout the whole scheme of God's providence. When the eye is made to run over years and ages, it will discover a track running along the whole territory, now disappearing, but again clearly marked; a stream meandering and sometimes hiding itself, and seemingly lost, yet, like Arethusa, appearing again, and holding on its way to the place to which it has to bear its waters. There will be seen a line of transmission from age to age, and events are explained by other events separated from them by a thousand removes. Looked at in a narrow and prying and jealous spirit, every individual part may seem to be mere twisted and intertwined threads, yet eventually out of the whole is formed a web of varied but beauteous and harmonious texture.

So far as the connexions are natural, we have already contemplated them, and so far as they are moral and religious, they will yet come under our notice. Meanwhile, it may be needful, in the way of caution, to show how these general rules, in guiding us to combinations which are real, will keep us from trusting in others which are visionary. Of this latter description are omens, charms, incantations, the spells that are used in witchcraft and necromancy, and the supposed relations of events which give rise to divination and astrology. The more mysterious chemical agents, it is thought, may be used in an inexplicable way for inflicting or preventing direful evils. Dreams, the shape of the clouds, the flight of birds—and especially of certain birds, as the eagle and the raven, the pecking of chickens, the state of a brute's entrails, the rolling of thunder, the movements of the planets, the very ravings of maniacs, and the neighing of horses, have all been regarded as prognostics of future events. "The Egyptians and Babylonians, dwelling in plains, drew foreknowledge from the mystic dances of the stars. The Etruscans, addicted to the frequent offering of sacrifices, derived it from the inspection of the entrails of animals, and from the prodigies in the heavens and earth which fell frequently under their notice owing to the nature of their climate and country. The pastoral Arabians, Phrygians, and Cilicians, wandering over their plains and mountains, sought to pierce futurity by the observation of the flight and music of birds."* Our Saxon forefathers "trusted in their magical incantations for the cure of disease, for the success of their tillage, for the discovery of lost property, for uncharming cattle, and the prevention of casualties. One day was useful for all things; another, though good to tame animals, was baleful to sow seeds. One day was favourable to the commencement of business, another to let blood, and others wore a forbidding aspect to these and other things. On this day they were to buy, on a second to sell, on a third to hunt, on a fourth to do nothing. If a child was born on such a day, it would live; if on another, its life would be sickly; if on another, it would perish early."*

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* Cic. De Divin., Lib. i. 93, 94.

It may be observed, first of all, in reference to the superstitious trust in such connexions, that it is not the legitimate following out of the doctrine of a particular providence. According to that doctrine, God is to be seen in every event; but, in the superstitious trust referred to, it is assumed, farther, that certain events are combined in a mysterious manner. We may believe in the connexion of every event with God as its author; while we do not believe, but rather positively deny, that events no way causally, or morally, or religiously connected, have yet an inexplicable association, supposed to be the means of widening the sphere of man's knowledge, but in reality the means of perplexing and confounding him. There is no impossibility involved in the Stoic idea, that, according to the constitution of things, certain signs should precede certain occurrences.† We do not deny the possibility of God establishing such a harmony between things that have no visible relation; but we deny, as a matter of fact, that He has instituted such a correspondence. The burden of proof lies on those who maintain the positive doctrine; and the evidence furnished is as visionary as are the fancies of those who dwell in this region of dreams. A few casual coincidences, eagerly seized upon by an excited temper, are no proof of a connexion, causal or contemplated. Nor do we find much difficulty in explaining the mystic or superstitious belief referred to, and that without supposing that it has evidence to build on. It lives in the regions of mists and clouds, where fancy may weave her shapes to suit her humours, and where excited feeling will form every half-seen object into ghosts and spectres.

We can readily enter into some of the feelings which lead men to betake themselves to oracles and auguries. Every one must at times have felt an intense desire to get a glimpse of the objects behind that veil, which, hanging immediately before us, ever hides futurity from the view. The man is about to take a step which may exercise a momentous power over his future destiny; he is setting out on an important journey, or commencing a great undertaking; he is a husbandman, and about to sow the crops which are to be his sustenance; or he is a king, invited to enter into a truce, or declare war; or a soldier, about to buckle on his armour;—or he has arrived at a crisis in his own affairs, or in those of the society with which he is connected; he has long been pursuing some favourite plans, which are expected speedily to bring important results; he is on the eve of great events, for evil or for good; he is on a bed of distress, and sees death looking in at the curtains;—and the wish of his heart is, that there were but some means of looking into that dim futurity, of deciding his hesitating judgment, and putting an end to this intensely painful suspense. At such times the mind will catch at every fact or fancy that may seem fitted to relieve its perplexities. Is there no gifted man who sees farther than others into the coming hour which is so portentous? Are there no appointed connexions by which the future may be seen in the present or the past? Can no horoscope be constructed by which these mystic movements of the planets may be made to reveal the movements of advancing earthly events? Will no voice issue from some hallowed grove or shrine? Will no whisper of these breezes, no form in these mists or clouds, no vision of supernatural being, be vouchsafed to guide us in these perplexities, or, at least, to put an end to this uncertainty, more excruciating than the most dreadful reality? From feelings that have been at work in our own breast, we can in some measure understand the intensity of passion which led Brutus to see the vision before the battle of Philippi; which brought Saul, before engaging in his last battle, to the witch of Endor, to call up his faithful monitor, Samuel; and which induced a king of Israel, who had suffered what seemed to be a fatal injury by a fall, to send messengers to the famous temple at Ekron. Without at all supposing that heaven lends its sanction to such frivolities, we can understand how persons should be led, at times of excited feeling, whether of fear or expectation, to have recourse to those dreams, mysteries, and casualties, which furnish the materials of all the omens or charms which superstition and knavery employ.

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* Turner's Anglo-Saxons, B. vii. c. 13.

† See Cic. De Divin., Lib. i. 118, where this view is expounded.

Left without sufficient evidence to support them, we are led, by the whole analogy of the Divine procedure, to reject them. There is far too much of high dignity and solemn majesty in the march of Providence to admit of its stooping down to construct these coincidences of petty ingenuity, worthy only of a mystic, a magician, or a boy poet. While such dim and distant correspondences could confer no real benefit, they would ever tempt the mind to waste its strength, mounted on an unbridled fancy, bearing its rider whithersoever it would. So far as mankind cannot discover the future by the use of their faculties, in observing the ordinary proceedings of Providence, it were vastly better, for their peace, their moral discipline, and improvement, that the cloud should continue to rest upon it. The wisdom of God is seen as much in what he hath concealed as in what he hath revealed. "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing."

It is, therefore, safest, and in every way best, to keep to the rules which we have laid down, and to insist on a natural, a moral, or a religious law connecting the events that are supposed to be coincident; and if no such law can be pointed out, to look on the relation as possibly casual. Herein lies the distinction between religion on the one hand, and superstition on the other, in respect of the view which they take of Providence;—that whereas the former traces up every occurrence to God, and is prepared to acknowledge that there is a relation between one event and another, only when there is evidence that God hath instituted bonds of union between them, the latter is ever looking out for capricious combinations and conspiracies of circumstances, and is transferring to them a feeling of joy or of fear, which ought as a sentiment of trust and reverential awe to be reserved for God. The superstitious man is not so anxious to secure the favour of God as certain auspicious signs and prognostications, and is not so afraid of giving offence to the Divine law, as of certain ominous seasons and conjunctures. The light of science, which investigates natural law, has already put to flight many of these birds of night which disappear in the morning. A rigid attention to moral and religious law should drive away the remainder, to leave us to contemplate, with less distraction, the real mysteries of God's providence, employed in the support of his moral and religious government.

III. When may we regard ourselves as entitled to fix on the precise end contemplated by God in any given event?

We may safely affirm, in reference to this question, that God intends to produce, by the event, the consequences that flow from it according to the natural ordinances of his providence. He undoubtedly means the cause to produce its effects, and the train of causes to be followed by its train of consequences.

But may he not intend also to serve other ends, not following so naturally or necessarily? Most assuredly he may. But it is more difficult for us to determine specially, and in any given case, what these ends are. Some persons decide on this subject as dogmatically as if they had been the counsellors of Deity, or let into all the secrets of his government. There is one inquiry, however, which we should always make, and that is, What are the lessons which we may gather for our own personal instruction? In making this inquiry in an humble spirit, we may, if guided by a pure moral law and a true religion, gather daily lessons from the dispensations of Providence. In doing so, it is not needful to determine the precise ends of Deity. Our primary anxiety should be to determine what are the lessons which *we* should learn; and if we are enabled to gather them, we may safely conclude, that this was one of the special ends contemplated in the wisdom of heaven. If it be needful to go farther, we must ever take along with us the rules previously laid down. We may always connect events together which have a physical connexion; and in regard to other connexions, we must be quite sure that they are linked by the moral or religious laws of God. The winds that sunk the Spanish Armada, which threatened at once the Protestant religion and the liberties of England; and, again, the favourable breezes which enabled William of Orange, when these privileges were endangered, to escape the fleet that was ready to seize him, and land in safety on our shores:* these are providential occurrences, in which pious minds have ever delighted to discover the hand of God; and this, too, with reason, according to the principles which we have been developing. Nor can we regard as less striking those internal dissensions which drove the pilgrim Fathers from England, to found in the far west a country which should acknowledge its inferiority to England only in this respect, that the one is the mother, and the other the daughter. History, rightly interpreted, shows us many instances of national crime being followed by its appropriate punishment. "The expulsion of the Moors, the most industrious and valuable inhabitants of the Peninsula, has entailed weakness upon the Spanish monarchy, which the subsequent lapse of two centuries has been unable to repair. The reaction against the Roman atrocities produced the great league, of which William was the head; it sharpened the swords of Eugene and Marlborough; it closed in mourning the reign of Louis XV. Nor did the national punishment stop here. The massacre of St. Bartholomew, and revocation of the edict of Nantes, were the chief, among remote but certain, causes of the French Revolution, and all the unutterable miseries which it brought upon the Bourbon race, and the professors of the Romish faith."*

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* Mr. Macaulay says, "The weather had, indeed, served the Protestant cause so well, that some men, of more piety than judgment, believed the ordinary laws of nature to have been suspended for the preservation of the liberty and religion of England. Exactly a hundred years before this, they said the Armada, invincible by man, had been scattered by the wrath of God. Civil freedom and divine truth were again in jeopardy, and again the obedient elements had fought for the good cause. The wind had blown strong from the east, while the Prince wished to sail down the Channel; had turned to the south when he wished to enter Torbay; had sunk to a calm during the disembarkation; and as soon as the disembarkation was completed, had risen to a storm, and had met the pursuers in the face."—*Hist. of England,* vol. ii. We have quoted this language for the purpose of expressing our astonishment, that a mind so expanded as Mr. Macaulay's should not have seen that, instead of requiring to suspend his laws, God might have arranged them with the very view of bringing about these beneficent results.

Mankind have in all ages experienced the greatest interest, and yet the greatest difficulty, in interpreting those events of providence which are afflictive in their character.† We have not arrived at that stage of our investigation at which we may determine precisely the meaning of physical evil; but it is evident that the ends served by it in the providence of God are of a mixed character.

Sometimes it seems to be PUNITIVE, and the expression of the Divine disapproval of sin. We can take no lower or lesser view of it in some of its forms.

At other times it seems to be PREVENTIVE of evil. There are dark tunnels through which we must pass to speed us on our way; and there are also circuitous routes prescribed to preserve us from the danger lying in the shorter path. In every shape in which it may come, affliction is disagreeable at the time, but it is, notwithstanding, often like the mantle of snow, which in these colder regions covers the springing grain in winter—a means of preservation from a greater and more fatal scourge.

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* Alison's Marlborough.

† See this whole subject treated in the light of Scripture, and with the results without the processes of the highest philosophy, in the two admirable works of Dr. Buchanan on Affliction.

Not unfrequently it is PURIFYING in its nature. It is in the furnace that the dross is separated.

Now, it is often difficult to determine, as to any given affliction, whether it is meant to accomplish the one or the other of these purposes, or whether it may not be subservient to them all. Here, as in regard to every dispensation, we are on safe ground, when, in the first instance, we observe God in every event; and when, in the second place, we inquire what are the lessons which it is fitted to read us. This should be the habit of every soul which is waiting with becoming obeisance upon the teaching of its Creator. When we make the farther inquiry, What is the end contemplated by God, in ordaining this event or that event? difficulties thicken around us. One answer we should always be ready to give, and that is, that the human mind cannot discover all the purposes which may be intended by any of the operations of God. For he accomplishes a variety of ends by the same means; and it would be presumptuous in us to conclude that we had discovered all the objects contemplated in any one of his dispensations. One salutary reflection will rise in every thinking mind on the survey of affliction under all its various forms—that it is a blessed thing that God has kept such agency in his own hand, instead of committing it to man; for trials, like powerful medicines, need to be dispensed in proper quantities and by a careful hand, lest there be one drop too little or too much.

Great caution must at all times be exercised in deciding upon what are supposed to be the judgments of heaven. The Great Teacher, who has given us such enlarged and comforting views of the Divine guardianship, is careful to warn us against the influence of prejudice and passion in the interpretation of the proceedings of God towards our fellow-men. "Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, Nay; but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Or those eighteen, on whom the tower of Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay; but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." The error of the Jews manifestly consisted in yielding to an uncharitable temper of mind. The same error, proceeding from the same spirit, is still exhibited. If an individual has always been suspected of some secret crime, an extraordinary reverse of fortune is thought sufficient to establish it. If great and apparently lasting prosperity is suddenly changed into unexpected adversity, it is thought to be in righteous retribution for some act of fraud or dishonesty; and men begin to search for cases in which he defrauded the orphan, or overreached the simple, or gratified his own selfishness at the expense of the public good. It is not at the time when prosperity is disposed to smile on the individual, that these insinuations are made and pass current: at these moments, men have not the courage boldly to face the culprit and denounce the crime; but, like cowards, they wait till he has been laid prostrate by the hand of another; they only persecute those whom the Lord has already smitten, and hasten to add reproach to misery, and insult to suffering.

But still, we may in some cases confidently discover the judgments of God. There are certain physical evils which proceed directly from sin—as the poverty which follows extravagance, and the disease which springs from intemperance and other vices; and we are only referring the effect to its cause when we connect the two together. In other cases, also, the connexion, being always of a moral or religious character, may be so visible as at once to compel every man to discover the overruling arrangements of heaven, in making physical events encourage the good or punish the evil. But, in all such cases, both facts must be ascertained, and each on its own independent evidence, before the relation can be discovered. We must not conclude that any given deed is sinful, merely because it has been followed by certain prejudicial consequences. But when the deed is proved to be sinful on other evidence, we may connect the two together, for it looks as if God had connected them. We are not to conclude that any individual has been guilty of secret or highly aggravated sin, merely because he has been exposed to affliction. This was the error of the friends of Job, and for which they were severely reprimanded. But when he is known, on independent evidence, to have sinned, we are warranted, whether the sin be physically connected with the suffering or no, in tracing a connexion appointed by God himself.

It is comparatively seldom that we have such a minute acquaintance with every incident in the past life of a neighbour, as to be able to determine the precise end contemplated in any visitation of God towards him. In some cases, indeed, the connexion is manifest to the man's neighbours, or to the world at large; as when intemperance and excess lead to poverty and disease, and cunning raises up to distrust, and is caught in the net which it laid for others. In other cases, it is visible only to the individual himself, or his most intimate friends. In all cases, it is easier to determine the meaning of the judgments of God in reference to ourselves, than in their reference to others, when they are exposed to them. For being acquainted with all the incidents of our past life, we may trace a connexion between deeds which we have done, and trials sent upon us—a connexion which no other is intended to seek, or so much as to suspect. While affliction can in no case prove the existence of sin not otherwise established, yet it may be the means of leading the person afflicted to inquire whether he may not in his past life have committed some sin, of which this is the punishment or cure. Here, as in many other cases, the rule is to be strict in judging ourselves, but slow in judging others.

SECT. V.—PRACTICAL INFLUENCE OF THE VARIOUS VIEWS WHICH MAY BE TAKEN OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

An ancient heathen philosopher and historian has drawn an ingenious comparison between atheism and superstition.* With the additional light which we now enjoy, we find it needful to multiply the objects compared, and we may be enabled to form a juster estimate of each.

Some see God in none of his works. This is the error of a mind besotted by passion, or stung by an evil conscience, or which has lost itself in the mazes of proud and rash speculation. It is Atheism. If it could be cured by reason, we have abundant evidence to present to it. But atheism is a crime, rather than a mere intellectual error. It is to be cured only by its being so humbled as to be constrained to attend to the traces of an intelligent mind, which the Creator has imprinted on all his works around us, and of a Governor and Judge imprinted on the heart within.

Again, there are some, and their number is multiplying with advancing science, who cannot but see prevailing order in the works of God, and are prepared to appreciate their beauty, but who have a difficulty in distinguishing between them and the Creator. Observing a universal harmony, they can rise to no higher conception of deity than as a principle of order inhabiting the universe, but not to be distinguished from it. IT IS PANTHEISM. It is the error of a mind delighting to reflect on order and law, but with no adequate conception of the moral and the spiritual. It overlooks the conscious personality within us which declares that we are distinct from the universe, distinct from God, and that therefore God is not all; and it sets aside that feeling of free-will and responsibility, which announces that we must give account of our conduct to another, and that therefore all is not God. Were it disposed to leave its own idle phantasies and to follow us, we would show that it is in error, by pointing to the traces of a ruling as well as an inherent principle, of a governor as well as a pervader of the universe; we would point to the skilful adjustment of the laws of nature, which, as distinguished from the laws of nature themselves, is specially called the Providence of God, and which gives evidence of a power in nature, but which is also above nature, acting upon it, without being acted upon in return.

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* Plutarch on Superstition.

Farther, there are those who perceive God only in certain of his works, in the more striking agents of nature, and the more startling events of his providence, in the lightning's flash and the meteor's glare, in all unexpected occurrences, in sudden elevations or reverses of fortune, in pestilence, disease, and death, but not in the calmer but no less powerful and wonderful agents ever in operation—the sunshine, the revolving seasons, the continued enjoyment of health, and the munificent provision made for the sustenance of man, and the supply of his varied wants. God is seen by them, but not in all his works—in those only which awe the imagination, which excite the fancy, or which move the passions of the heart. IT IS SUPERSTITION. It springs from a conscience awakened, but not pacified, in a mind under fear, but yet without faith. If its restlessness would allow it calmly to consider any subject, we would widen its range of view so as to make it embrace all that is benign and peaceful, all that is orderly and benevolent in the works of God. We would make it view the earth when it is bathed in loveliness in the calm of a summer evening, as well as when it is agitated by storm; and look on the heavens, not only when covered with angry clouds, but when their face is serene in the softest blue, or shining in brilliancy in the light of the thousand lamps which they nightly kindle.

Finally, there are those who discover reigning design in all God's works, and so are opposed to Atheism; who notice evidence of a power separate from and above nature, a pure and benevolent God, and so have extricated themselves from the toils of Pantheism; who observe a present God in the more striking agents which he employs, but who trace him, too, in those daily gifts which are not less beneficent because they are constantly bestowed, and in those regular arrangements of Providence, which are not less wonderful because they may have become familiar to us. IT IS A SOUND AND ENLIGHTENED FAITH. It keeps the mind in a vigorous and healthy state. The atmosphere of which it breathes is at once strengthening and refreshing—unlike that air, all azote, of which the Atheist breathes till every living affection is chilled into death; or that air, so close and sultry, in which the Pantheist wastes a dreamy and useless existence; or that air, now so highly oxygenated, and now so exhausted of the principle of life, so elevating and depressing by turns, in which the victim of superstition passes a life of restlessness and fever.

The ATHEIST closes his eyelids, and asserts that there is no God, because he will not open his eyes to behold the traces of him. The philosophical and poetical PANTHEIST, the worshipper of nature, opens his eyes only half-way; and, amidst the many lovely "dreams that wave before the half-shut eye," he refuses to gaze upon the still lovelier but more dazzling image of a holy God. The VICTIM OF SUPERSTITION opens and shuts his eyes by turns—opens them when there is anything to alarm or please, but shuts them against all that might enlighten the reason, or mould the character after the likeness of Divine perfection. TRUE FAITH opens the eyes, and keeps them fully directed upon the glorious works of nature, and wonderful events of providence, till they rise, in glowing admiration, to the perception of a light ever shining, with unchanged and unchangeable lustre, upon a universe rejoicing in its beams; and they continue to gaze, till, "dazzled by excess of light," they shut themselves in holy meditation and devout adoration.

ATHEISM is a system cold, and damp, and dark, as the place of the dead. PANTHEISM shows us a beautiful mansion—but the sight is melancholy; we have no desire to enter the building, for it is without an inhabitant; there is no warm heart to beat, no just mind to rule, in these large but tenantless halls. It gives us illusions which "serve to alleviate nothing, to solve nothing, to illuminate nothing; they are vapours which may, indeed, show bright and gaudy colours when seen at a great distance, but in the bosom of which, if one enters, there is nothing but chill and gloom."* SUPERSTITION shows a strange land—such as the eye pictures in the twilight, when objects are imperfectly seen—with scenes ever shifting with the capricious temper of those who rule over them without grace and without dignity, who are now sportive and now revengeful, but never just and never benevolent, while those subjected to their power alternate between wild merriment and excruciating misery. TRUE FAITH opens our eyes on a world on which, no doubt, there rests a mysterious cloud, rising from the damps of sin, but above which, shining with bright and steady beams, there is a luminary before which that cloud must at last fade away and disappear, and leave a land of perpetual calm and never-failing light.

The ATHEIST is bold and arrogant, but it is with the audacity of a man who is contending with an inward principle. Plutarch is wrong in saying that he is free from all fear and perturbations of mind. You may observe that he is awe-struck at the void which he hath made, and that he starts at the sounds which he strikes up to relieve the sepulchral silence. If he fears not God, he fears the next event, dark and horrid, which blind fate may evolve. He boasts that he is above the fear of punishment; but he may be oppressed by a dread of pain, and he knows of no comforter to cheer him under it. The PANTHEIST wanders in a lovely region, but he meets there with no friend to cheer, to sympathize with, to support, to comfort him. He talks of communion with nature, or the spirit of nature; but his idea is ever evaporating and vanishing into nothing; and the real thought is ever pressed upon him, that the whole is an illusion; for there is no living being to feel responsive to his feelings, and his soul saddens under a sense of utter loneliness. He feels like a man shut up in an abode of surpassing magnificence, but without a friend to whom he can unbosom himself;—he is worse than Rasselas in his Happy Valley. He perceives that all is regular and harmonious, but still there is something wanting; he is alone, and "it is not good for man to be alone," in respect either of the creature or the Creator. Such is his feeling, even when nature wears a smiling aspect, and events are prosperous; and when the heavens lower, and affliction casts its shadow over his path, and all things in this lower world seem dark, and dreary, and sullen, his melancholy is soured into discontent, and irritated into murmuring and complaint. He complains, and no one answers, and his spirit is chafed by its own chidings. Ever friendless, he feels now what it is to be friendless in the hour of trial. The SUPERSTITIOUS MAN has his moments of high ecstasies and ethereal pleasure, of convulsive action and feverish joy, but succeeded, ever and anon, by periods of exhaustion and weakness, of distaste to and incapacity for exertion. After his strength has spent itself, he feels, in the ethereal atmosphere of which he breathes, like those travellers who ascend the Alps or Andes; and who, when they reach a certain elevation, experience a quickness of breathing, an acceleration of pulse, a loss of appetite, and nausea, which issue in a complete prostration of strength, and irresistible somnolency. His very rest is like that produced by opiate drugs—he awakes from it in startling alarms, and with darker forebodings. With occasional joy, he is yet without peace; harassed by fear, he is without genuine trust and confidence; scared by expected punishment, he is never allured by deep and fervent love. It is an habitual FAITH, looking to the living and loving God, which alone is fitted to impart cheerfulness to the soul at all times, and consolation in the seasons of trouble and of death.

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* North British Review, 1846, No. I., John Foster.

The ATHEIST is rash in his actions, dark in his passions, is apt to be proud in prosperity, and comfortless in affliction; and when wearied of life, he vainly attempts to terminate his existence by an act which may indeed kill the body, but leaves the soul to be tormented by its passions, more furiously than ever—by scorpions instead of whips. The PANTHEIST professes to follow nature, and, making no struggle to rise above it, he is carried along with the stream; and feeling himself to be a mere bubble upon its surface, he becomes a vain and empty trifler. He is probably an idle dreamer, or a sipper of the sweets of literature, an indulger in fine sentiment, or a wild speculatist; and, with no great end before him, he fails in accomplishing any work that may promote the welfare of the race. The SUPERSTITIOUS MAN vacillates between hot and cold, between hope and fear, between self-confidence and despondency. He is afraid to act, lest offence be given to the God he fears; and afraid not to act, for the same reason. He is ever restless, but his activity may be as frequently exercised in spreading misery as in propagating good. It is FAITH in a living God, the Governor of nature, which calls forth the energies of heaven-born souls, which sets them forth in the work of relieving misery, uprooting corruption, stemming the tide of depravity, and helping on the amelioration of the race in knowledge and virtue.

It is curious to observe how extremes meet, just as we find the farthest east and west meeting in the figures constructed on our globes. Atheism and pantheism may seem to be utterly opposed, and yet they agree in more than they differ. The pantheist, when compelled to explain himself, is landed in atheism; while atheism, seeking to screen its nakedness, would fondly clothe itself in some of the illusions of pantheism. The regular laws, and the mechanical successions which the one recognises, do not differ essentially from the principles of order and development, of which the other delights to discourse so profoundly, and yet withal so unmeaningly. The ideas of which the one dreams are as difficult to grasp as the blank void which the other creates. It has often been observed that superstition, in the natural recoil of the human mind, leads to atheism. "Superstition," says Plutarch, "both led to the production of atheism, and when it was gendered, furnished an apology—not, indeed, just and fair, but still not devoid of plausibility—for its continuance. For it is not because persons see anything blameworthy in the heavens, or faulty and irregular in the stars, in the seasons, in the revolutions and motions of the sun around the earth which are the cause of day and night, in the nourishment provided for living creatures, or in the production of fruits, that they concluded that there is no God in the universe; but the ridiculous works and manifestations of superstition—its spell-words, its movements, its juggleries, its charms, its circumambulations, its drummings, its impure purgations, its filthy acts of supposed chastity, its barbarous and unlawful inflictions of punishment and affronts close by temples—all these give occasion to some to say that it were better there were no gods, than that there were gods who accept of and delight in these things—so tyrannical, so imperative in, and so easily offended by, trifles."* But Plutarch is mistaken, when in the same passage he tells us that atheism is on no occasion the cause of superstition; for atheism, by a recoil equally natural, issues in superstition. The wisest men would, with Bacon, rather believe all the fables of the Koran, than be driven to the conclusion that this universe is without a Creator and Governor. When the mind feels that scepticism hath left it nothing to stand on, it will take refuge in the first superstition which offers itself. It thus happens, that while the two may seem to be opposed in their very nature, they yet produce and assist each other; and there are individuals and nations ever vacillating between the two—now betaking themselves to the one, and now to the other, and ever swinging like a pendulum past the point of rest.

None of these can present an acceptable service to God. The pantheist professes to see God in everything, but in reality sees him in nothing. He talks of the communion which he holds with the spirit of the universe, but it is a mere communion with his own thoughts. He believes just as little as the atheist in a living deity—in a ruling power, in a moral governor, a holy sovereign, or a righteous judge. Nor can God be pleased with the perverted adoration which superstition offers. Its worship has always been a strange mixture of horror and of levity—of laceration and licentiousness. The very idea entertained of God is an affront offered to him. "What sayest thou? Is he impious who thinks that there are no gods?" asks Plutarch; "and he who believes them to be such as the superstitious man describes them, not much more impious? For myself, I would rather that men should say regarding me that there was no such person as Plutarch, than that they should say that Plutarch was a person unsteady, changeable, prone to passion, exacting revenge for inadvertences, offended with trifles."

When the faith is not a faith in a living God, it will produce no living affection. When no love is supposed to reside in the Divine mind, no love to him will be kindled in our bosoms; and there will be none of that cheerful obedience which proceeds from affection. The heart of the atheist becomes as blank as his system; and the service of the pantheist has as little emotion as the supposed principle which governs the universe. It is curious, too, to observe how superstition lands us practically in the same consequences as the atheism and the pantheism which it so much abhors. The mind which discovers God only so far as its feelings are moved and its fears awakened, will feel itself beyond restraint when there is no such excitement. Hence the abject and craven superstition, which prompts to trembling and despair when the man feels himself to be in circumstances of terror, is quite compatible with the most unbridled indulgence and unblushing criminality, when the mind is freed from the pressure of alarm. He who sees God only at certain times, and in certain places, as in temples and groves, will feel as if he were beyond his cognizance and control in all other positions. Hence we find the earnest (we cannot say spiritual) worshipper at the altar cheating in the market-place, and indulging the basest propensities of his nature, when he thinks himself under the clouds of concealment. Borrow is not relating anything contrary to human nature, when he tells us of the gipsy mother who said to her children, "You may go and steal, now that you have *said* your prayers."

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* Plutarch on Superstition, 12.

Whatever these systems may differ in, they all agree in this, that they are not fitted to lay an effectual restraint on pride, on lust, on passion, and the other evil principles of the human heart. The atheist glories in the circumstance that he is unrestrained: it is one of the supposed advantages of his system. Not that he thereby attains to greater freedom; for the pride which he has called in acts as the Saxons did, when the ancient Britons invited them to their assistance against their northern neighbours—it proves a sterner master than the power from which he wished to be delivered. Nor will the cobwebs which the dreamy pantheist weaves be able to restrain the rising passion. This smoke cannot be made to face the wind. Nay, the pleasure and lust by which he is tempted will not experience much difficulty in inducing the loose and accommodating system to weave them into their laws and principles; and evil will be allowed, as a step necessary to the accomplishment of what is good. As to practical influence, the mystic faith of the pantheist differs from the absolute unbelief of the atheist, as the vapours which the waters exhale, and the moon tinges with her beams, differ from nonentity. Nor will the irregular impulses of superstition be able to stem the ever-flowing torrent. With a variety of impelling, but no regulating principles, he is driven to or from his religious offices, to or from his favourite indulgences, according to the direction of the current which happens to prevail at the time.

Still less can these systems quicken, refine, and spiritualize the soul, impart to it a steady cheerfulness, or become an ever-flowing source of comfort. Such effects cannot follow from a scheme which gives no God, or a God without moral qualities, or a God supposed to be capricious. These effects can flow only from belief in a God, the governor and judge of all, ever restraining and punishing, as he ever hates sin, and yet withal as loving and merciful as he is just and holy.

SECT. VI.—METHOD OF ANSWERING PRAYER, AND FURTHERING SPIRITUAL ENDS.

Prayer is about the most elevated state of thought and feeling of which the mind is susceptible, reaching higher than the imagination of the poet when his eye is most excited, and his fancy takes its wildest flights ; embracing more than the capacious thoughts of the philosopher, at the time when he has got the glimpse of some bright discovery just circling, like the sun, above the horizon, and throwing a flood of light on objects before wrapt in twilight obscurity. Can our understandings comprehend anything more enlarged than an omnipresent God ? Can our wisdom be more profoundly occupied than in fathoming the depths of the Divine counsels ? Can our imaginations mount higher than those third heavens in which the Divinity sits enthroned ? Can our faith and love repose anywhere more securely or delightfully than on the word and faithfulness of God ? How can the whole soul be so nobly or profitably employed as in holding communion with its Maker ? There is no affection of the mind which is not engaged in prayer, except it be the baser and the more depraved ones of our nature. Here is reverential awe stript of all the baseness of mere fear ; here is hope, not the mere hope of earthly bliss, but of the favour of God, which, when enjoyed, is the fullest bliss. Here is faith, feeling itself firm and immovable in that being on whom it rests ; and here is love, kindled at the sight of everlasting love.

True prayer quickens the soul without agitating it ; as the river is most interesting when there is a ripple upon its surface to show that it is moving ; as the sky is most beautiful when there is enough of breeze to clear away the mists and damps that have been exhaled from the earth, but no storm to disturb its serenity.

Prayer, when engaged in, in spirit and in truth, free from pride and the troublings of the passions, contains within itself its own answer, in the heavenly calm and repose which it communicates. Like every other good act, it is its own reward. When thus spread out before God, heaven itself seems to descend upon the soul, as we have seen the sky reflected on the bosom of a tranquil lake spread out beneath it. He who cultivates a devotional spirit is like the earth in its orbit, guided by a central power, and illuminated by a central light, and carrying everywhere a circumambient atmosphere, with a life-giving and refreshing influence.

Some one illustrates the power of prayer by the case of a man in a small boat laying hold of a large ship ; and who, if he does not seem to move the large vessel, at least moves the small vessel towards it. He would thus shew how prayer, even though it could not directly move God towards the suppliant, might yet move the suppliant towards God, and bring the two parties closer to each other.

This is truth, but not the whole truth. We fear that no one will be induced to pray for the mere pleasure of the prayer ; nor from the hope, that though God is not moved by it, he himself may be improved. There would be an idea of illusion (not to say hypocrisy) accompanying this feeling, which must render the prayer, even if persevered in, powerless in its effects on the man himself, as well as upon God. After hearing a sermon preached by Dr. Leechman, in which he dwelt upon the power of prayer to render the wishes it expressed more ardent and passionate, Hume remarked with great justice, "We can make use of no expression, or even thought, in prayers and entreaties, which does not imply that these prayers have an influence."* Prayer can accomplish the ends referred to by Leechman, only when it proceeds from a living faith in God, as at once the hearer and the answerer of prayer. In this respect there is a remarkable analogy between the influence of the moral, and that of the religious, affections. All the virtues are pleasurable in themselves, and lead to beneficial results; but they do so only when exercised as virtues, and not for the mere pleasures or benefits that accompany them. When attended to merely for the sake of the consequences, it will be found that the consequences do not follow. In like manner, we find that spiritual affections produce such a hallowed influence on the soul only when performed as duties which we owe to God. We must therefore seek for some deeper foundation on which to build the duty of prayer.

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* Letter to Baron Mure, in Burton's Life of Hume.

Prayer has a quintuple foundation in natural religion. Three of the grounds are merely subsidiary to the others, which furnish the proper basis.

First, The deepest and highest feelings of our nature prompt to prayer. Admiration of God's works, gratitude for favours, a consciousness of guilt, and a sense of helplessness, all find their becoming expression in the soul pouring itself out to God. This is the result to which they spontaneously lead, except in so far as they are restrained, by a speculative unbelief, or by cherished sins. The very atheist in these days is compelled to become pantheist, that he may find outlet to these feelings, in communion with an invisible power. Rousseau talks of a "bewildering ecstasy, to which my mind abandoned itself without control, and which, in the excitement of my transports, made me sometimes exclaim, 'Oh, great being! oh, great being!' without being able to say or think more."

To take only one of these feelings—the sense of weakness—"There is," says Guizot, "a sentiment to be found under diverse forms among all men, the sentiment of the need of some external succour, of a support to the human will, of a force which may lend its force and strength to our necessity. The man searches all around for this support, and for this force to aid him; he requires them as the encouragement of friendship, as counsel to his wisdom, as an example to copy, to approve of what he likes, and from a dread of blame. There is not a person who cannot produce in his own case a thousand proofs of this movement of a soul seeking out of itself an aid to its own freedom, which it feels to be at once real and insufficient. And as the visible world and human society do not respond always to his wishes, as they are infected with the same insufficiency which he finds in himself, the mind goes beyond the visible world, and above human relations, for the support which it needs; the religious sentiment develops itself, and man addresses himself to God, and calls him to his succour. Prayer is the most elevated, though it is not the only form, under which there is manifested this universal sentiment of the feebleness of human will, this recourse to an exterior force to which it may unite."*

Secondly, Man's state of dependence renders prayer a becoming exercise. The lesson taught by his inward feeling is also the lesson taught by his relation to the external world. God has so constituted his providence, that man is at all times dependent on his Maker for the comforts and the very necessaries of life. God could, no doubt, have placed mankind in a different constitution of things, where praise and not prayer would have been the befitting exercise. Situated as he is, he is constrained to feel a sense of dependence; and of this feeling, prayer is the suitable expression.

But we fear that neither of these two considerations, operating singly, will be sufficient to produce steady and persevering prayer. For if there are certain impulses of nature which would draw us in one way, there are other impulses which would draw us in an opposite direction; there is pride, holding us back when we would lie low at the footstool of God's throne; there is the opposition of the heart to what is spiritual, repelling us when we would come to the light. Hence we find, that in no pagan religion, nor in nature's religion under any of its forms, is there any sustained or regular prayer in the service paid to the gods. Gifts may be offered to express gratitude, ejaculations are emitted to give utterance to a sense of want, dependence, and guilt; but there is no prayer of a continued, of an elevated, or elevating description.

Under the influence of distracting natural feeling, the following is an experience to which the hearts of many will respond. Early trained to it under the domestic roof, the person regularly engaged in prayer, during childhood and opening manhood. But as he became introduced to general society, and began to feel his independence of the guardians of his youth, he was tempted to look upon the father's commands, in this respect, as proceeding from sourness and sternness; and the mother's ad-vice, as originating in an amiable weakness and timidity. He is now careless in the performance of acts which in time past had been punctually attended to. How short, how hurried, how cold, are the prayers which he now utters! Then there come to be mornings on which he is snatched away to some very important or enticing work, without engaging in his customary devotions. There are evenings, too, following days of mad excitement or sinful pleasure, in which he feels utterly indisposed to go into the presence of God, and to be left alone with him. He feels that there is an utter incongruity between the ball-room or the theatre which he has just left, and the throne of grace to which he should now go. What can he say to God when he would pray to him? Confess his sins? No; he does not at present feel the act to be sinful. Thank God for giving him access to such follies? He has his doubts whether God approves of all that has been done. But he may ask God's blessing? No; he is scarcely disposed to acknowledge that he needs a blessing, or he doubts whether the blessing would be given. The practical conclusion to which he comes is, that it may be as consistent in him to betake himself to sleep without offering to God what he feels would only be a mockery. What is he to do the following morning? It is a critical time. Confess his error? No; with the gay scene floating before his fancy, and with the taste and relish of it yet upon his palate, he is not prepared to acknowledge his folly. Morning and evening now go and return, and bring new gifts from God, and new manifestations of his goodness; but no acknowledgment of the Divine bounty on the part of him who is yet ever receiving it. No doubt, there are times when he is prompted to prayer by powerful feelings, called up by outward trials or inward convictions. But ever when the storms of human life would drive him to the shore, there is a tide beating him back. His course continues to be a very vacillating one—now seeming to approach to God, and anon driven farther from him, till he obtains from books or from lectures a smattering of half understood science. He now learns that all things are governed by laws regular and fixed, over which the breath of prayer can exert as little influence, as they move on in their allotted course, as the passing breeze of the earth over the sun in his circuit. False philosophy has now come to the aid of guilty feelings, and congeals their cold waters into an icicle lying at his very heart, cooling all his ardour, and damping all his enthusiasm. He looks back at times, no doubt, to the simple faith of his childhood with a sigh; but it is as tc a pleasing dream or illusion, from which he has been awakened, and into which, the spell being broken, he can never again fall.

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* Civilisation en France, cinquième Leçon.

We must, therefore, seek for a firmer basis on which to rest the duty of prayer.

Thirdly, Prayer is a duty which we owe to God. It is due on the part of the intelligent creature that he should thus exalt the great Creator. Common gratitude should prompt every thankful mind to express its sense of the Divine goodness. Every reproach of conscience should bring us down upon our knees before that God whose law we have broken. Prayer, "uttered or unexpressed," is the form which this duty of obeisance, which we hold to be a moral duty, should assume. It is man, in his own way, and according to his nature, addressing himself to God, who, according to his nature, must hear and listen to the petitions of his creatures. There may be prayer where there are no words employed, and the heart may move when the lips do not move. Still, it is according to the constitution of man that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth will speak; and words, while forming no essential part of the prayer, will yet essentially aid it, by keeping the mind from falling into blankness and vacuity, by instigating and guiding it in a certain train—in short, they furnish cords to bind the sacrifice to the altar, they supply a censer in which the delicate incense of our feelings may be presented before the Lord.

Fourthly, God has so arranged his providence that he provides an answer to prayer. It is of the utmost moment to establish this truth, and to show that there is a means by which God can answer prayer in a manner worthy of his own character, and suited to ours.

Dr. Chalmers has treated this subject with his usual enlargement of mind. He supposes that prayer may be answered in one or other of two ways, in perfect accordance with the ordinary procedure of God. He supposes that prayer and its answer may be connected together, as cause and effect, that they may form a sequence of a very subtle kind, more subtle than any of the sequences of the most latent physical substances, and not therefore observable, except by those who have that nice spiritual discernment which is communicated by faith. Or, he supposes, that God may interpose among the physical agents beyond that limit to which human sagacity can trace the operation of law. He calls on us to observe how, in all human affairs, we can trace the actual agency of law but a very little way back. Natural powers, as we follow them, become so complicated in their operation, that God might easily interfere with them, and change their operation without the possibility of his presence being detected. He might, for instance, change the laws which regulate the weather, and send a storm or calm at any given place or time; or he might modify the laws by which the living functions of the human body are regulated, and send health or disease, and no man be able to say whether there has been an interposition or not.*

We are unwilling to cast a shade of doubt upon these beautiful views. It does seem, however, as if the first were scarcely consistent with the correct idea of prayer. To suppose that there is a causal connexion, does not leave that discretion to the Divine Being in answering prayer which it is most needful that he should exercise. Nor does the analogy of nature furnish us with a single instance of a mental feeling causally influencing an object or event with which it has no physical connexion. It may be safely said of the second view, that it never can be directly disproved. It takes us into a region in which, if proof cannot easily be discovered, it is certain that disproof cannot be found. Both theories may be fairly held as serving the purpose intended by their author, and as showing that it is possible for God to answer prayer. It is a favourite maxim with Chalmers, and one of importance, that an hypothesis may be fitted, when it serves no other purpose, to take the edge off a plausible argument. The objector, in this case, insists (as the major proposition in the syllogism) that God cannot answer prayer in consistency with his usual procedure; and Chalmers deprives this general proposition, and therefore the conclusion, of all force, by showing that there are at least two conceivable ways by which God can grant the requests of his creatures, in perfect accordance with the principles of his providence.

But is it necessary to resort to either of these ingenious theories? Is there not a more obvious means by which God can answer the prayer of faith? It is not necessary to suppose that prayer and its answer form a separate law of nature, for the answer may come as the result of other laws arranged for this very purpose. Nor is it needful to suppose that God interposes to change his own laws. The analogy of his method of operation in other matters would rather incline us to believe that he has so arranged these laws, that by their agency he may answer prayer without at all interfering with them. We have been endeavouring to develop the plan of providence by which he can secure this end. His agents were at first ordained and marshalled by him for the accomplishment of all the wise designs of his government; and among other ends, they may bring the blessings for which faith is expected to supplicate. He sends an answer to prayer in precisely the same way as he compasses all his other moral designs, as he conveys blessings and inflicts judgments. He does not require to interfere with his own arrangements, for there is an answer provided in the arrangement made by him from all eternity. How is it that God sends us the bounties of his providence?—how is it that he supplies the many wants of his creatures?—how is it that he encourages industry?—how is it that he arrests the plots of wickedness?—how is it that he punishes in this life notorious offenders against his law? The answer is, by the skilful pre-arrangements of his providence, whereby the needful events fall out at the very time and in the way required. When the question is asked, How does God answer prayer? we give the very same reply—it is by a pre-ordained appointment, when God settled the constitution of the world, and set all its parts in order.

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* Chalmers' Natural Theology, B. v. c. iii.

There is nothing here opposed to the principles of the Divine government, but everything in consonance with them. We have, in a previous section, shown how events may be joined by a natural tie, by a moral tie, or a religious tie. In regard to the natural tie, we have shewn that in nature there are beautiful relations in the works of God, not originating in any causal connexion. Again, we have hinted that we may expect God to support his moral law by physical agencies. The illustration of this subject will yet pass under our notice. Meanwhile, we would have it observed, that prayer and its answer may be held as connected by a religious tie. Prayer, we have seen, is a duty which man, in his present state, owes to his Creator. Man is a religious as well as a moral being. There are important relations between man and his Maker, originating, no doubt, in morality in its widest sense, but rising far above a mere common-place virtue. Now, just as God sustains his moral law by the arrangements of his physical providence, so we may expect him also to support his spiritual government by the same means. We must ever hold the physical as the inferior, to be subordinated to the moral and the spiritual, and we expect it to be employed to uphold these as the end. Just as he has arranged his providence, as all thinking minds acknowledge, to encourage virtue and discountenance vice, we anticipate that, by the same agency, he may also provide an answer to prayer. And it is a fact, that all who have continued steadfast in the prayer of faith have declared, as the result of their experience, that God has been faithful, and has not failed to show that he has been attending to their supplications.

We reckon it a presumption in favour of the view now expounded, that it leaves the laws of nature undisturbed, not only within, but beyond the limit at which human observation ceases. Geology and astronomy conspire to inform us that there is a uniformity of law throughout the widest regions of time and space. It seems as if, throughout all knowable time and space, there were a government by general laws, which others as well as the human race may observe and act upon. The parts of the great Cosmos are so connected that irremediable evil might follow the interference with law, even though that interference should be beyond the limit of human observation. We cannot conceive it to be for the mere good of man, that general law has reigned throughout the long eras of the history of the earth before man peopled it, or that it reigns in the distant regions of space, of which he can take but a bare cognizance. Other ends must be served by this universality of law; and we are not willing to suppose that it ceases at the point at which man's eye must cease to follow it. Every new discovery in science widens the dominions of law, and we are not convinced that the interests of religion require us to limit them. Altogether, when there is a way by which God can answer prayer without disturbing his own laws, it is safest to conclude that this is the actual method employed

No objection can be brought against this view, from the

Divine immutability or the doctrine of predestination, which will not apply so extensively as to reduce it to an absurdity, (*Reductio ad absurdum.*) Since God is unchangeable, and has arranged everything beforehand, why need I pray at all? The reply is—that the answer to prayer proceeds on the foreseen circumstance that the prayer will be offered—that if the man refuses to pray, he shall assuredly find it fixed that no answer is given. Should petulance insist on a farther reply, we think it enough to show that this is a style of objection which would apply to every species of human activity. Why need I be diligent, if it is arranged whether or no I shall get the object which I expect to gain by industry? is the next form which the cavil may assume. If the objector is an ambitious man, we ask, why pursue so eagerly that expected honour, when he knows that it has been ordained, from all eternity, whether he shall secure it or no? If he is a man of pleasure, we ask, why such anxiety to procure never-ceasing mirth and amusement, when he knows that it is pre-determined what amount of enjoyment he is to receive in this life? Ah! it turns out that the objection, which presses with no peculiar force upon the supposed Divine arrangements in regard to prayer, is a mere pretext to excuse the unwillingness of the person who urges it, for he discovers it only in those cases in which he is indisposed to act.

There appears to us to be a beautiful congruity in this method of answering prayer. Prayer is effectually answered, and yet there is no encouragement given, nor room allowed, to any possible evils, such as pride and self-confidence, or easy self-complacency and inactivity. If prayer and its answer had been connected as cause and effect, there might have been a risk, that when the person had prayed he would rashly conclude that exertion might now cease. But in the system now developed, while there is assuredly a connexion between the entreaty and the blessing, it is not a connexion in the mechanical laws of nature, but in the counsels of God; and the man who has prayed, as he looks for the answer, feels that he must fall in with the Divine procedure. There is a wholesome discipline exercised by the very uncertainty (humanly speaking) of the means which God employs for sending the answer, and the person who has prayed is kept humble and dependent, in the exercise of a spirit of waiting and watchfulness. He feels that he dare be proud and presumptuous only at the risk of defeating all the purposes served by his acts of devotion. He sees that, on ceasing to be active, God may probably punish him for his folly by laying an arrest on the expected answer to his petitions.

It is another congruity of this method of providence, that God can so join petition with its answer, that, while the connexion is not observable by his neighbours, it may be traced by the man himself. There is an obvious propriety in such a provision being made, in so delicate a matter as the soul's communing with its Maker. We may observe the same principles in other dealings of God. In providential events, as, for instance, in afflictive dispensations, the individual can see many adaptations to himself which are hid from the eyes of others. There is a special propriety, as it appears to us, in the answer to prayer being conveyed in this way, as a token to the man himself, but which he is not ostentatiously to display before the world, and thereby proclaim himself a favourite of heaven. By the nicely fitted machinery of his providence, God can connect the prayer and its answer by threads which are all but invisible to others, but which are clearly discerned by the man himself.

The same general rules that guide us in looking for an answer to prayer, also guide us in determining the exceptions. It is not our prayer that produces the blessing by its inherent power, but it comes by the special appointment of God, and so we look for an answer only when the request is agreeable to the will of heaven. We always leave a discretion in the hands of God; and every man who knows himself, and the perversity of his desires, will rejoice that there is power left with God, and that he does not promise to grant all our requests. We see, too, how there is a discretion left with God, not only as to whether he will send the blessing, but as to the time, the manner, and means, in respect of all which the soul is not to dictate to Deity, but patiently to wait upon his pleasure. Nor should it be forgotten that the tie that connects the prayer and its answer is a religious tie; and we are thus reminded, that it is only when the prayer is spiritual that it can be expected to bring with it the anticipated blessings.

Nor should it be overlooked that, by these skilful arrangements, God can not only answer prayer, but answer it with such an opportuneness of time, place, and mode, that when the blessing comes, it is as if it had dropped immediately from heaven. God delays the answer that it may be the more beneficent when it comes. The stream is made to turn and wind, that it may receive contributions from every valley which it passes, and all to flow more largely into the bosom at last. God's plans ripen slowly, that the fruit may be the richer and mellower. Hence it is that the royal munificence of his bounty knows no limits at last. " He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think."

Fifthly, Prayer has a most beneficent reflex influence upon the character. We are unwilling that the obligation of prayer should be made to rest primarily on such a basis. But, an independent basis being secured otherwise, it is indeed most delightful to trace the blessed influence which prayer produces upon the character. We must first show how it shines in its own light, and then it is pleasant to observe how its light is reflected from off the heart and temper, which it beautifies and adorns. Prayer, like virtue, should not be courted for its mere indirect consequences; but, when sought for its own sake, it brings with it a thousand other blessings.

Combine these five considerations, the two presumptions in the feeling and state of man, the two direct proofs in the duty of prayer, and the appointed connexion with its answer, and the accessory in the results that follow, and we have a foundation on which prayer may rest, and from which it can never be dislodged.

These observations on the subject of prayer hold true in regard to all other spiritual ends contemplated by God. Whether the mere observer of physical nature notices it or no, we doubt not but the " earth is meant to help the woman," that the physical is used to promote the spiritual, which is to be the last and greatest of all the historical developments evolved by God in our world. But the discussion of this subject would conduct us into a far higher field of inquiry than the common providence of God; and we wish it to be understood that in these sections we are treating of the ordinary dealings of God in the world, and not of the supernatural government of his Church.

CHAPTER III.

RELATION OF THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD TO THE CHARACTER OF MAN.

SECT. I.—GENERAL REMARKS ON THE RELATION OF THE PHYSICAL TO THE MORAL PROVIDENCE OF GOD.

Two truths, regarding man's moral nature, stand out as among the most certain of all that are revealed by the consciousness—the one, that there is an essential distinction between good and evil; and the other, that the moral is higher in its very nature than the physical. Place before the mind two actions—the one morally good, and the other morally evil; the one, let us suppose, a truthful declaration, uttered by a person tempted to equivocate; and the other, a falsehood deliberately uttered: the mind, in judging of them, at once and authoritatively proclaims that there is a difference. Again, place before the mind a moral good and a physical good—say, the furtherance of a nation's virtue on the one hand, and the production of some beautiful piece of art on the other, and the mind is prepared to decide that the former is immeasurably the higher.

Assuming, then, that there is a moral good, and that the moral is higher than the physical, let us now look at the connexion between them. That there is such a connexion, we hold to be one of the most firmly established of the truths which relate to the government of God. The God who hath established both hath established a relation between them.

There is nothing unreasonable or improbable in the idea, that God should connect one part of his government with another. Every person acknowledges that the physical is used to promote the sentient and the intellectual in man's nature—that is, the external world is so arranged as to minister to man's happiness and comfort, and to help on his growth in knowledge and intelligence. We have been at pains to point out what we consider as among the most striking instances of this latter kind of adaptation. We have also shown that there may be fine threads connecting the physical with the spiritual. But there is a no less curious, though perhaps, in some respects, a more complex relation, between the physical and the moral—the physical, as the lesser, being always regarded as subordinated to the moral, as infinitely the greater. The physical events of providence have most assuredly a bearing upon the character of man.

Can we be wrong in supposing that, if man had been a being spotlessly pure, God would have governed him by a moral law, producing the same harmony throughout the world of mind as physical law does in the world of matter? It is conceivable that, in such a world, the whole marshalling of the Divine plans would have been clear and orderly, as in the arrangements of a well-regulated family, all the members of which love one another, and love their head. The physical would have been so ordered as to serve the same purposes with those kind rewards and encouragements which parents are ever giving to their obedient children.

But man, it is evident, is not habitually guided by any such moral principle. Take any rule, the loosest and most earthly, purporting to be moral law, and examine him by it, and we are constrained to acknowledge that he is not obeying it. His character being of this description, it is to be expected that the government of the world should be suited to it. It is questionable whether the mode of government best fitted for holy beings is at all adapted to those who have broken loose from the restraints of moral principle. When a father finds his children rebelling against him, and setting his authority at defiance, he must regulate his family on totally different principles from those adopted when the bonds that connected the members were confidence and love. God cannot in any case abandon the government of any portion of his own universe, and when he cannot rule by moral laws, he must needs curb by physical restraint.

But in pursuing this course of reflection, we are in danger, it must be acknowledged, of outrunning the premises as yet established. We find ourselves looking into the purpose supposed to be served by them, before determining the facts themselves. In this chapter we establish one of the facts: we show, that God's providence is intimately connected with the moral character of man, and, in particular, that there are restraints laid upon human sinfulness and folly by skilful arrangements meeting and conspiring for this purpose. It must be left to a subsequent part of this Treatise to establish another fact, furnishing the other premise—namely, that man's character is sinful. From the two premises, when fully established, we arrive at a discovery of the means adopted by God to govern a fallen world in which the moral law has lost its power, and perceive how he can bind by physical chains those who have broken loose from the gentler ties of affection and moral obligation. So far as we seem to stretch the argument beyond this point in this chapter, it is to be understood as merely presumptive. It is not conclusive till it is furnished with the counterpart fact, to be discovered by that inquiry into man's moral principles which we purpose to undertake in the Book which follows.

SECT. II.—AIDS TO VIRTUE, AND RESTRAINTS UPON VICE.

There is surely somewhere within the dominions of God a world in which there is no disorder and no violence, and in which the moral law, the royal law of love, is sufficient to bind the intelligent creatures to God, and to one another. Account for it as we may, it is evident at the first glance that our lot is not cast in such a world. We find ourselves, instead, in a state of things in which there are much confusion and misery produced by human wickedness—this province, rebellious though it seem, being all the while under the discipline of God.

Possibly, the problem which had to be solved in the counsels of heaven was—Given, a world in which the love of holiness and the hatred of sin do not exist, or are at all events very weak—to determine a method of governing it, so that it may not run into inextricable confusion, and destroy itself by its own madness and violence. Are we living in such a constitution of things?

But we are not at present inquiring into the nature or extent of man's love of virtue or vice: this is a topic which falls to be considered in a subsequent part of this Treatise. We may, however, at this stage of our inquiries, take a view of the numerous means which God employs for the promotion of virtuous, and the restraining of vicious conduct, apart from any truly virtuous principle that may lodge in the human breast.

I. There are a great many direct encouragements given to virtuous, and restraints laid upon immoral conduct. There is the pleasant sentient feeling which the benevolent affections diffuse, by means of a nicely adjusted nervous system, through the bodily frame; and again, there are the nervous irritation and weakness produced by the cherishing of the malignant feelings or by sinful excess. Every one knows that the cultivation of virtuous affections is favourable to the health; that worldly cares and anxieties carried to excess, that envy, jealousy, and revenge, that the criminal indulgence of animal lusts, all injure and waste the body. God thus indicates, by laws more easily understood than those of the best ordered kingdoms, that he approves of moral conduct, and disapproves of the opposite.

II. Providence is so arranged, that in the natural course of events, virtuous action leads to a multitude of results which are beneficial to the individual. The upright man is trusted, and has a thousand means of advancing his interests denied to the cunning and deceitful. The friendly man receives friendship, which the selfish man can never obtain, or enjoy though it were granted to him. It needs no deep reflection to discover, that honesty is the best policy, that benevolence is its own reward; and multitudes act upon such prudential considerations, when higher principles might fail to maintain any powerful influence over them. Had God constituted his government on a different principle, and so that in the end vice were commonly successful, and productive of the greatest amount of happiness, truly we know not if there would be any remains of apparent virtue among the great mass of mankind; it is certain that violence must have reigned to an extent which would have made this world altogether intolerable, and have rendered it a deed of benevolence on the part of God to destroy it with all possible speed. But let us not be misunderstood. We do not mean to assert that man has nothing but a cold and calculating selfishness. We assume that he has generous and sympathetic feelings, (we speak not now of virtuous principle;) and the aids to benevolence which God has furnished serve the same purposes as props do to the ivy—give it bearing and direction; and benevolence, we suspect, would often fail without such a support to lean on.

III. Nor are these the only means which God can employ, or which he does employ, for the correction of evil, and the furtherance of that which is good. He has other and incidental, but still most potent, means of furthering the same ends in the "wheel within a wheel," by which he can arrest the purposes of mankind, and the effects that would follow, at the instant of the design or execution. The history of the world is ever displaying instances in which schemes of daring wickedness, fitted to produce incalculable evil, have been stayed in their progress, by providential interpositions. How often have the judgments of God visibly alighted upon the daring opposers of the will of God, while others have escaped! just as the lightnings strike the bold cliff and the lofty tower which rise proudly to heaven, while the plains and the lowly cottages are unmolested. The death of the Roman Emperor Julian, when he was bent upon the restoration of polytheism, and on the crushing of Christianity, as yet adopted by perhaps a minority of the empire, is one of the many providences which every reflecting mind will discover in the history of the Church of Christ. On the other hand, the good which could not make way by its own strength, has often been helped on by favouring circumstances. The coldest and most secular historians are constrained to discover an overruling power in the events which furthered and hastened the Great Reformation. The simultaneous, or all but simultaneous, discovery of the magnet, of the art of printing, of the telescope, and of a new world, the general revival of letters, and the awakening of a keen spirit of inquiry and enterprise, opened the way for truths which might not have spread so rapidly by their own inherent power. Take any great or beneficent change produced in the state of the world, inquire into the causes and occasions of it, and you find a host of conspiring agencies all tending to a given point, and evidently under the guidance of a presiding mind.

What all men see on a great scale in the history of the world and of great events, every observant man must have remarked in his own little circle of acquaintanceship, or in his own personal experience. Every one who has watched the ways of providence must have noticed how schemes of good were furthered, and at last were crowned with success, not so much through their own efficiency or excellence, as by the circumstances which favoured their development and execution. Almost all may remember instances in which the plots of cunning were disclosed when they seemed about to be successful, or in which the hand of violence was arrested when it was lifted for action.

IV. As the aggregate result of the regulations of Providence, there are *groups* of arrangements fitted to restrain the individual from vice, and to cement society. The class of arrangements last considered are of an individual and accidental character, being of the nature of those fortuities which, as we have seen, serve so important a purpose in the government of God. Those now falling under consideration are rather of the nature of those general laws which, acting uniformly, exercise a constant influence upon the world. Like these general laws, they are the result of skilful adjustments; and being constant, or recurrent after proper intervals, they tend to bind mankind together, and to counterbalance ever-recurring evils.

A few instances, out of many presenting themselves to the observant eye, will indicate the kind of means which God employs to keep human waywardness within bounds. Look at this quiet rural district of our land, a kind of peninsula to the contiguous world, from which it is all but separated. There is not an event occurring during many years to disturb the outward harmony which visibly reigns in it. The citizen who retreats to it in the season of the year when all nature is smiling, is inclined to think that this decorum must proceed from the loftiest principle and high-toned religion, and concludes that he has discovered paradise still lingering on our earth. Alas! he needs only a little familiar and household acquaintance with the inhabitants to discover that there are feuds, individual and family, raging in many a bosom. As he is initiated into the secrets of the little world, he finds that it is but a miniature of the great world, and that there are smouldering jealousies, heartburnings, and animosities, where he thought that all had been confidence and love. Whence then, you ask, this pleasing propriety and visible peace? On inquiry, you may find that there are counteracting influences in the very evil agencies which are at work in the community. Every man's eye is upon his neighbour's character, and he who exhibits selfishness, deceit, or violence, instantly becomes the object of general suspicion and dislike. The very curiosity and jealousy, so prying, which the parties exercise towards one another, are the means of counteracting the evil consequences which would follow, as the heat of summer raises on their mountains the moisture and the cloud to moderate its scorching influence.

Turn now to a different scene, to one of the closest lanes of a crowded city. So far from every man knowing his neighbour's character, there is scarcely any one who knows his neighbour's name. You meet here with none of those backbitings and jealousies which so fretted the other community; but we miss, too, that decorum which proceeds from a sense of character, and a fear of offence. The personal and family feuds have disappeared, but there have departed with them all the offices of kind and obliging neighbourhood; and we are among a population radically selfish, often malignant, and always disposed to lay hold on every criminal indulgence which does not insert its sting into them the instant they attempt to seize it. Here, too, however, we have a counteracting influence in the vigilant police, which can be easily provided by communities assembled in cities. Public opinion was the police in the rural district; and when the public became too extended, and its opinion too diffused to be effective at any one point, it found means, in its very extension, of arresting the evil which its extension occasioned.

The same kind of observation, carried out to other states of society, will detect similar counterbalancing agencies. The poor are dependent upon one another, and are in consequence kind and obliging. It is seldom that a sufferer in the lower grades of life is neglected by neighbours and relatives. A dozen sick-nurses are ready to proffer their services when a poor man is in severe distress, and are all the more likely to perform their offices in a kindly manner, from the circumstance that they look for no fee or reward. The richer portion of the community do not feel themselves to be so dependent on their neighbours and friends, and hence are not so kind in their offices; but then the sufferer does not require the same tokens of friendship and regard, for he can purchase for money what the other obtains from affection. The same remark applies to those countries which differ from each other in respect of the provision made by law for the support of the poor. When there is no legal provision, every poor man is disposed to sympathize with his neighbour, from a keen perception of his own possible condition. On the introduction of poor-laws, these gentle offices are apt to cease, for they are felt to be no longer demanded by so strong and imperative a necessity.

Again, the savage feels how dependent he is upon his family and his tribe, and he exhibits corresponding qualities. He becomes hospitable and clannish in his character. But while kind to individuals, and devoted to his tribe, he has no universal benevolence, and he reckons himself at liberty to make war with every tribe not specially connected with his own. As society advances in civilisation, each man becomes less dependent on immediate neighbours, but feels more and more his connexion with the race; and hence he is apt, in the clashing competitions of the world, to become individually selfish, but generally benevolent and cosmopolitan.

Without such arrangements, favouring what is good and discouraging what is evil, virtue would have great difficulty in retaining a place in our world. But by such powerful instrumentality, this world can be kept from lapsing into total disorder. This agency is so powerful, operates so universally, can so change with changing circumstances, can be wielded so suddenly and unexpectedly, and with such awful and irresistible force, that God might, we doubt not, rule by it a world in which there was not one virtuous principle or truly holy affection.

SECT. III.—ARRANGEMENTS NEEDFUL TO THE STABILITY OF THE SOCIAL SYSTEM.

The arrangements noticed in last section related more especially to man as an individual; those considered in this relate to man in his social capacity. There are arrangements needful in order to the stability of the social system, and first among these we meet with two positive institutions.

First, There is the FAMILY ORDINANCE. Instead of the human species being consigned to solitary separation on the one hand, or of being congregated into large promiscuous companies or herds on the other hand, we find them allotted along the surface of this wide world into little communities, living under the same roof, and connected by a thousand gentle offices which they discharge one towards another, and to which they are prompted by interesting ties of feeling and affection. The system is in admirable adaptation to our state and our nature. We come into the world, not like the young of some animals, able to act for ourselves, but in utter helplessness, and we find that God has provided for us kind parents who delight to minister to our infirmities, and who feel as if the infant's smile was a sufficient reward for all their toilsome days and waking nights. The heart responding to heart, the reciprocal tenderness expressed in a thousand practical ways, are fitted, beyond anything which man can devise or conceive, to draw forth the feelings and to train the affections of the infant and juvenile mind. The memory, guided by the heart, here comes to the aid of the judgment, and renders all lengthened argument unnecessary; for, far as our memory goes, it calls up scenes of unwearied watchfulness and melting love, and tells us that no nurture could be so bountiful, as none could be so pleasant, as that which takes place under the dews of a mother's kindness and the shelter of a father's counsels.

Wild theorists have laboured to overturn this system, but God in his providence hath inscribed folly on all their mad and profane attempts to disturb his arrangements; and it has been found, that after producing not a little temporary misery, these parties have been obliged to abandon their schemes as prejudicial or impracticable. In ancient Sparta, Lycurgus substituted public education for family training, and the experiment terminated in rendering a whole nation cold-hearted and selfish. Socialism, under some of its forms, has proposed to exchange a household for a promiscuous life; but, as might have been anticipated, the change when carried into effect has led to caprice and cruelty, and opened the floodgates to every form of vice.

Secondly, There is the ordinance of CIVIL GOVERNMENT. There is a necessity for such a restraint, in order to the very existence, and still more in order to the wellbeing, of communities. God has, also, speedily confounded all those visionary systems which have been projected to supersede this institution of heaven. There are means of securing governors, in the love of power which is so strong in some minds, and in the talent for ruling for which other parties are distinguished. There is a provision for obedience being rendered, not only in the palpable advantages of government, but in the feelings of allegiance, of loyalty, and nationality, which spring up in the human bosom.

Thirdly, There is the PHYSICAL DEPENDENCE OF MAN. We have seen, in the last chapter, how dependent man is on physical arrangements. All the parts of the frame are so closely connected with each other, that the least derangement in any one may render all the rest useless. We have seen, too, how this complication becomes greater according as we approach nearer to man—how the net becomes more closely woven the nearer we come to him who is restrained by it. The laws of the principle of life, of the brain, of the nervous system, of the muscles, of the bones, of the lungs, of the heart, of the liver, and other vital functions, must all be in healthy operation, in order to constant and well regulated activity. Every one knows, too, how much the temper, the sensibilities, the floating impulses and notions, nay, the very talents and opinions of mankind, and through them their whole character, are determined by the bodily temperament. It is good for man to consider how dependent he becomes in consequence of this involution of providence. Not that he is to be regarded, after the representation of some silly theorists of our day, as the mere creature of circumstances, his character taking its hue like his skin from the climate in which he lives, or like the insect from the food by which it is nourished. Man is conscious that he has a judgment and will of his own, which, as being the true determining causes of his conduct, involve him in deep responsibility. But while man's will and accountability remain untouched, God has means of accomplishing HIS WILL, and that with or without the concurrence of man's will. While men's thoughts and affections and volitions are all free, God has a thousand ways of directing, or of thwarting, if need be, their purposes, and turning them towards the accomplishment of his own plans of infinite wisdom.

Fourthly, The UNCERTAINTY OF HUMAN LIFE is also one of the statical conditions of the government of the world. While a life much shorter and more uncertain would have prevented man from undertaking any great work, and laid an arrest on human progress, it is just as evident that a more lengthened life, with a greater security for continued health, would have tempted mankind to bolder schemes of ambition and wickedness.

May we not discover a reason in some of the considerations now urged for the shortening of the lives of mankind after the flood of Noah? For wise reasons, all of which we may never be able to discover, but one of which no doubt was the lengthening of human experience, and the handing down of the results of it to future generations, God saw fit to allot to mankind a longer earthly existence in the early ages of the world. And until such time as mankind became numerous, had learned the art of combination, and were disposed to spurn at all moral restraint, there might be some measure of order and peace produced by God, even in a wicked world where men lived till nearly the age of 1000 years. But when the race had learned the arts, when they knew how to unite in their daring and ambitious schemes, when the sons of God, the children of the Church, married into the wicked world, and the restraint which the Church laid upon the world was removed, then it was befitting that the existing dispensation should be terminated by a flood, which swept away the inhabitants. The whole earth was filled with violence; and but for a change in the method of government, this violence might have become beyond measure intolerable. In the new dispensation, the bow in the cloud was a sign that the earth should not henceforth be visited by such a catastrophe; but contemporaneously with it, and in order to render such an interposition no longer needful, there was to be a shortening of man's life, and apparently, too, a greater uncertainty as to the time of the approach of death. Man's gigantic plans of wickedness were not henceforth to be arrested by so terrible an event as the Flood; but means, too, were taken to prevent their schemes from attaining so tremendous a magnitude. May we not discover, too, in the confusion of tongues at Babel, and the consequent dispersion, a special arrangement of heaven for keeping the inhabitants of this world from combining to produce such an amount of disorder and violence as must have prevented this world from fulfilling the ends contemplated by its Governor?

Fifthly, There is THE DEPENDENCE OF EVERY MAN UPON OTHERS OF HIS SPECIES. Even Robinson Crusoe was dependent on other men for his gun, which may have employed many a hand in constructing its several parts. The greater portion of mankind must lean more or less on a vast number of other men. We should consider, too, how these other men on whom we depend are as dependent as ourselves on others of the race. It would appear as if there was so little coherence in society, so little of true affection or righteous principle to band the members which compose it together, that they have to be made to stand like piles of dead wood (so different from living trees) by leaning upon each other. What dreadful catastrophes follow, and what a confounding of human wisdom, when God removes any of these supports, and allows the fabric to fall by its own instability.

In consequence of advancing civilisation, the ends of the earth are brought much nearer each other. It might seem as if mankind could in consequence now combine the more readily for the accomplishment of some great end, fitted, it may be, to defeat the Divine purposes, like the building of the tower of Babel, which was meant to keep the race together, when it was the purpose of God to disperse them. But in the very widening of civilisation, there are powers called forth fitted to restrain the evil which that extension might produce. In the independence of thinking and acting which advancing enlightenment evokes, there is a counteraction to the fatal influence exercised by individual men—such as priests, lawgivers, and conquerors, who acquired so extensive a sway in the early ages of the world. The age of heroes is gone, because the world is now too sagacious not to see their ambition and pretence. In the adjustments of Divine providence, the very pride and rivalry of mankind are made to impose mutual restraints upon themselves, and one evil is made to counterbalance another.

It must be acknowledged, however, that while the power of great men has diminished, and to all appearance must continue to lessen, the power of combination among masses is greatly augmented by the intercommunion of ideas and sentiments. If large bodies of mankind could now be made to move under the inspiration of one common principle or impulse, the effects produced would be greater than in the earlier ages of the world. The inroads of the barbarians upon the Roman empire, and the spread of Mahometanism in the seventh and eighth centuries, would be insignificant events when compared with the results which would follow in these times from a similar impulse, political or religious, seizing the nations of the earth, and alluring them on to conquest. It is possible, that before the world's history closes, the powers of evil may thus unite in one grand effort and determination to gain universal dominion. Should such an occurrence take place, as seems very probable, it may be safely predicted that the movement will contain within itself the seeds of its own dissolution. For in very proportion as man's power of swaying distant regions and attaining great ends increases, so do the means multiply by which God can arrest human passion and disappoint human ambition. The ball, as it seems to gather strength and to roll on, bearing with it a chilling atmosphere, will be found, under an influence from heaven, to melt away more suddenly than it appeared.

What are commonly called the *vis medicatrix* of nature, and the *vis conservatrix* of society, spring, we believe, from such checks and adjustments as these, rather than from any inherent power in the objects themselves. Society is so constituted, that there is a means of counteracting human caprice, whatever be the form assumed by it. Society, like the steam-engine, has regulators and safety-valves, all self-acting, and ready to meet the threatened evil, from whatever quarter it may proceed. At the same time, it always happens that things advance most prosperously when there is no interference with them on the part of meddling wisdom, which is folly differing from other folly only in this, that it is more conceited.

With such aids to virtue and restraints upon vice, we see how perilous it would be to alter the present constitution of things in favour of what might seem to human wisdom to be a better. Defects might easily be pointed out in the very theories of the communists, whether they assume the forms of St. Simon, of Owen, or Fourier. All proceed on the assumed principle, that men are always or usually swayed by an enlarged self-love, according to which every one will pursue his best interests when he knows them; and on the supposed fact that the associations set up do provide for the best interests of the members. Now, this principle, we might show, proceeds on a mistaken view of human character. Mankind are far more frequently swayed by feelings, sentiments, impulses, and passions; by kindness, sympathy, and affection; by vanity, pride, and obstinacy; by ambition, envy, and revenge, than even by a calculating selfishness. In the systems of the Communists there is and can be no provision made for exercising, for guiding, and controlling such a conglomerate of sentiments and lusts. Hence their experimental communities have invariably, and very speedily, become scenes of wretchedness and dissension.* But there is such a provision made in the constitution of the world as under the discipline of God; and all attempts to interfere with any particular part of it, such as the family ordinance, will turn out to be as foolish as they are commonly wicked and profane.

All endeavours to elevate the degraded and the fallen, so far as they are not immediately religious, should proceed on the principle of calling in those aids and restraints which Providence furnishes. If the rising members of our agricultural labourers, for instance, are degraded in some districts of our land, by being cast out from the family, the cure is to be found in restoring them to the privilege of the family ordinance. It will be found, too, that every effectual means of reclaiming the abandoned and the outcast must contain within it a method of bringing the parties anew under the power of those supports which Providence affords to the continuance in virtue. It may be doubted, whether the attempts at present made to elevate the abandoned in the crowded lanes of our large towns can be successful, as a national measure, till the very crowding of human beings is abandoned as a system contrary to nature, and until the population are spread out in communities in which the aids to virtue may again come into force. The evils which extended manufactures have brought along with them, must be remedied by the wealth which these manufactures have furnished being taxed to bring about the natural system which they have deranged. In order to secure the co-operation of Providence we must adopt the system of Providence, and place the parties under its influence. Without this, all mere secular means will be found utterly useless in elevating human character to a higher level. Human wisdom is in its highest exercise when it is observing the superiority of Divine wisdom, and following its method of procedure.

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* The grand difficulty felt by the enemies of revelation in the present day, is to devise a social system which may stand without a religion, or to devise a religion which may stand a moment's investigation, and have power, which deism has not, over the heart and conduct of men. M. Comte discovering that mankind must have a religion, has developed one in his Politique Positive, now completed. In it we have a priesthood, worship, and sacraments, but no God; the infant being trained to be a polytheist and a fetichist—the child to be a monotheist, and the full grown man being instructed to adore a Grand Etre, who is the "continuous resultant of all the forces capable of voluntarily concurring in the universal perfectioning of the world, not forgetting our worthy auxiliaries, the animals," (tome ii. p. 60,) who is, in short, a deification of Comte's system of science and sociology. He complains that his admirers in this country have not adopted his moral and social scheme, and speaks of the conversion of those who adopt his positivity and reject his religion as an abortion, proceeding from impotence of intellect, or insufficiency of heart, commonly from both. (Tome i. Pref., p. xv.; tome iii. Pref., p. xxiv.) What do Mr. Mill and Mr. Lewes say to this? Yet what have they to substitute for that which they reject? If they say that man can do without a religion, they contradict some of the deepest principles of our nature. Or if they think that some little *clique* in London can devise a religion, let them bring it out to the view that we may examine it. Meanwhile we are upon the whole glad that M. Comte has enabled us to judge of his. Christianity will not suffer by being placed alongside of it. The two best features of it, love to a neighbour and monogamy, are taken from the New Testament, while the sanctions given in the Word of God to both in an authoritative moral law and a living God, are removed without a substitute being provided, to regulate a nature acknowledged to be extremely imperfect, and with discordant and selfish tendencies far stronger that the benevolent affections. (Tome iii. p. 23.) As he has constituted himself high priest of his hierarchy, we would place him—if only the experiment could be conducted without injury to immortal interests—for the remainder of his life, at the head of a "positive" community, that the jealousies and disputes, of his contemplative and active classes, of his priests, women educators, and proletaires, displeased with the functions allotted to them, might become an appropriate punishment of his folly. But the experiment cannot be allowed, for his system would turn out to be the most intolerable despotism ever set up in our world, as admitting not only no liberty of action, but no liberty of education or thought, all being compelled to be positivists, and atheists as well. (See this avowed, tome ii. p. 8.)

SECT. IV.—STATE OF SOCIETY WHEN THE AIDS TO VIRTUE AND THE RESTRAINTS UPON VICE ARE WITHDRAWN.

We have been pointing out some of the embankments by which the turbulent stream of human life is kept in its course, some of the rocky barriers by which the waves of this ever-agitated sea are restrained while they lash upon them. Just as the native power of the stream is seen when the embankments are swept away, and the irresistible strength of the ocean when its opposing barriers are broken down, so there are times and places in which the usual supports of virtue and correctives of vice are removed, and we behold the true tendency of inward humanity. The character of the prisoner is discovered when the keepers are absent. We see the true dispositions of the children at those corners at which the master's eye is not upon them.

Let us examine the workings of human nature, when those adventitious circumstances which usually prop virtue are removed. Take a young man from a kind and religious home, transplant him suddenly into a foreign land, and place him there in a state of society in which high moral and religious character, instead of being valued and honoured, is rather scoffed at and despised, and operates as a barrier in the way of success. This youth, had he been allowed to remain in the scenes in which he was nurtured, might have been honourable, generous, and apparently pious in his demeanour; but in the new position in which he finds himself, he can be influenced by none of those considerations derived from prudence and the oversight of kind friends, which before guided him—and it is possible that, after a brief struggle, he may abandon himself to selfishness, to rapacity, and licentiousness, under every available form. Why this difference? Because, in the one case, virtuous conduct is aided, and in the other it is left unbefriended. We are not at present inquiring into the actual power which virtue possesses in the human heart; but it seems certain that there are thousands who court virtue when she has a dowry, who would discover no loveliness in her if she had no attractions beyond her own beauty.

The difficulty which the philanthropist experiences in dealing with the outcasts of society, on whom the aids to virtue have lost their power, furnishes another illustration of the same truth. It is not because they are so much worse than others that he finds his work to be so difficult, but because motives which operate powerfully upon mankind in general, such as pride, vanity, and a sense of character, have no influence upon them for good. It is now generally acknowledged that, in order to the reclaiming of criminals whose term of punishment is expired, it is absolutely necessary to distribute them in society, and in localities in which their previous conduct is unknown, and all that they may come once more under the ordinary motives of humanity. Our philanthropists have thus been brought to acknowledge the wisdom of the Divine method, and find that their success depends on their accommodating themselves to it. Yet how dark a view is thereby given of human character, when it needs such a carefully constructed system of props to bear up that virtue which should have stood in its own strength!

The rapidity with which certain persons become utterly reckless and abandoned when detected in crime, also points to the same conclusion. How quick, for instance, the descent of females, especially of ladies in the upper walks of society, and of the ministers of religion, when they have fallen into intemperance, impurity, or some similar vice, and been detected and exposed! Others might fall into the same sins, and rise again; but the persons now referred to feel as if a stain had been left on their character which human lustrations cannot wash out, and for which society provides no expiation; and concluding that they cannot be bettered, they are led without difficulty to abandon themselves to every besetting lust. The love of virtue, for virtue's sake, may be as powerful in this class as in others, who have extricated themselves from the toils which at one time surrounded them; and wherein then lies the difference? The tendency of both is downward; but as the one class is rolling on, it is caught, and at last restrained, by a thousand objects which Providence puts in the way, such as vanity, sense of character, and worldly success; whereas, in regard to the other, such barriers being removed, their course becomes that of the stone loosened from the brow of the mountain, and descending with an ever accelerated speed.

It seems as if virtuous and religious principle were so weak, that the man of highest character might, if placed in other circumstances, have become the most vicious. No one can tell how much he owes of the character which he may have been able to sustain, to the restraints of providence, rather than to any high and holy internal principle.

Take either of the extremes of earthly rank, and you find human nature showing its native inclination. It is proverbial that the extremes of wickedness collect at the extremes of society. Place persons so high that they know that they cannot mount higher, for they are on the very pinnacle, and so protect them that they feel that they are secured by their very position from falling, and the true dispositions of man's heart will be exhibited. Weaknesses and follies, which those who climb by the help of other men the heights of worldly aggrandizement would carefully curb or conceal, are unblushingly displayed, or perhaps even gloried in, by those who feel their independence; and vices which might have been kept down under a salutary fear of failure are allowed to spring up in rank luxuriance. Or take the other extreme. Place man so low that he cannot fall, chain him so down that he cannot rise, and again his inborn character develops itself. The virtues which proceed from a sense of shame and a fear of offence, now disappear, as well as all those which originate in a desire to rise in society. Discontent and grumbling, envy and malignity, leading to dishonesty and reckless criminality, become the characteristics of this state of society ; just as luxury and licentiousness, indolence and a selfish indifference to all human interests, are the distinguishing features of those who are in the enjoyment of prosperity which cannot be broken. In the one state, society, with its sunk and dangerous classes, spreads crime like a malaria, and is ready for revolution ; while in the other, it abandons itself to the softest and yet most selfish effeminacy, running after every frivolity, ready to contend for nothing but its own pleasures, and to toil for nothing but the retention of its ease. Our earth in the one state becomes bare and barren, and yet wild, rugged, and horrific, with dashing cataracts, and dizzy and headlong precipices ; and in the other state, like the dead swamps of moist tropical climates, polluting the very atmosphere, and spreading disease and death by the excess of its putrid and putrefying luxuriance.

The times when these adventitious props which keep up society are removed, have generally been times of excessive criminality. Take the seasons when a nation is intoxicated and maddened by prosperity—take Athens when its free citizens have succeeded in some of their schemes—or Rome when the victorious general distributed the spoils of his conquest—or our own country at the rejoicing on account of the restoration of Charles II., being the commencement of those scenes which produced so deleterious an influence on the British character in the reign of that monarch. What excess and riot in the festivals at these times ! what an abandonment to folly which does not even deign to wear a mask, or offer the homage which vice usually pays to virtue, by acting the hypocrite ! The pride and intemperance which prevail in our own land, when wages are high and trade is flourishing, furnish illustrations of the same tendency in our nature.

Both poles, the negative as well as the positive, are surcharged with deleterious influences and fatal power. A nation in extreme poverty—abandoned by the stream of wealth which at one time fertilized it—devastated by the inroads of war, or consumed by intestine broils—wasted by famine, or prostrated by pestilence—has commonly been virulent in its wickedness. Society at these times acts like the seamen who, when the last hopes of saving themselves in the storm have vanished, betake themselves to a maddening intoxication, and drink of any exciting or oblivious draught that may banish reflection. The social affections are dried up for lack of that delicate tenderness which feeds them, and the selfish and malignant ones spring up on the wrecks of human prosperity, affording them suitable nourishment. On those dreadful coasts on which wrecks are for ever strewn, the inhabitants are tempted to light up fires to allure the vessels with their spoils to points at which they may be stranded, and their goods seized. It is a picture, on a small scale, of those states of society in which men oppressed with want feel that they cannot better their condition by sacrifices to virtue, and may easily improve it by crime.

There have been times of upheaval in the moral world similar to those periods which geologists describe, when the boiling igneous fluid from below has uplifted and upturned whole continents and ocean beds which had lain undisturbed for ages. The distinctions of rank, and between one man's property and another's, have disappeared, and, in the confusion, common minds feel a difficulty in keeping hold of the distinction between justice and injustice—so much are their outward badges reversed and confounded. The king is bleeding upon the scaffold; the nobles are depending on their own peasantry; judges are prisoners at the tribunals over which they presided; the priesthood, so far from having power with heaven, are seen to be utterly helpless; cunning is overreaching sincerity; might is trampling upon right; unblushing confidence is the surest means of success; and bold but mean men are everywhere grasping honour and authority. What would be prudence in ordinary circumstances is now the highest imprudence, and wisdom with all its gravity is visibly inferior to folly. At these times vice will come forth without deigning to wear the garb of virtue; it stalks abroad, with its unblushing face unveiled, and its haggard arms laid bare, to find out and seize upon its victims; and it immolates them with the one hand, while it lays hold of the spoil with the other.

The thefts, the incendiarism, the rapes, the murders, which are the characteristics of the sacking of a town, have often been recorded by historians. The atrocities and horrors displayed by the crowded inhabitants of Jerusalem at the time of the siege by Titus—the madness, the murders, private and judicial, and the unbridled licentiousness, of the period of upheaval at the French Revolution, (prostitutes graced all their triumphs, and theatres were open every night during the Reign of Terror,) have long been the themes of indignant moralists.* More horrific still are the scenes disclosed when plague visits a populous city. Thucydides tells us, that, at the time when it raged at Athens, lawlessness reigned to a greater extent than ever it had done before. When the people saw the sudden changes of fortune, in the case both of those who perished so lamentably in the midst of their prosperity, and of those who before had nothing, and who now came to inherit large possessions, their ideas became confounded and their principles unsettled—they lost all sense of honour, and openly committed deeds which men are wont to hide from the view. Looking upon their properties and lives as so precariously situated, they abandoned themselves to whatever they thought would afford them immediate enjoyment. There was no fear of the gods, the historian tells us, for they felt that they could not be bettered by the worship which they paid; nor was the law of man regarded, for they saw that human law could not inflict a greater evil than that to which they were now exposed.† During the plague at Milan in 1630, the most atrocious deeds were perpetrated. Persons named *monatti* were authorized to enter any house and inspect it, and were employed to carry the sick to the Lazaretto, and the dead to the sepulchre; these men, becoming hardened in heart and blunted in feeling by their horrible office, came forth from the Lazaretto with feathers in their caps and singing merry songs, threw the dead into the carts as if they had been sacks of grain, and entered the houses of the infected for the purposes of extortion and plunder; while many, perceiving that the trade was lucrative, assumed the dress of these officials, and were guilty of robbery and the most shameful excesses. During the plague in London in 1665, there were numbers running with avidity to astrologers and fortune-tellers, who plied their work with more than their usual effrontery and success; others who made a boast of their profanity, and sported their blasphemy; there were reports of nurses and watchmen hastening the dissolution of the diseased, in order to get possession of their property; and there was more than the common number of thieves and robbers, and these busy at their unhallowed work in the chambers and about the very persons of the dead and dying. In a desolating plague at Bagdad in 1831, there were the usual robbery and pillage; and it is stated, that when, towards its close, the river inundated and swept away 15,000 people, the sensibilities of the survivors were so deadened, that the event passed without any remark being made, and without an attempt to relieve the sufferers.

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* "Paris," says Madame Roland, "sees its brutalized population either running after ridiculous fêtes, or surfeiting themselves with the blood of crowds of unhappy creatures sacrificed to its ferocious jealousy; while selfish idlers still fill all the theatres, and the trembling tradesman shuts himself up in his own house, not sure of ever again sleeping in his own bed, if it should please any of his neighbours to denounce him as having used unpatriotic expressions." All through the Reign of Terror there were thirteen or fourteen theatres advertised daily in the newspapers.

† B. ii. 53.

It looks as if with but a little more prosperity distributed among mankind on the one hand, or with a little more adversity on the other, it would have been all but impossible, by the ordinary means fit to be addressed to moral and responsible beings, to keep this world in subordination. The appalling wickedness which prevailed at Rome in the reigns of the emperors who succeeded Julius Cæsar, the abandoned shamelessness of the males and females of the upper classes, seem to show, that if mankind generally were placed in a situation in which every lust could be indulged without restraint, they would soon give themselves up to crime the most offensive and intolerable. "The corrupt and opulent nobles," says Gibbon, "gratified every vice that could be collected from the mighty conflux of nations and manners. Secure of impunity, careless of censure, they lived without restraint in the patient and humble society of their slaves and parasites. The emperor, in his turn, viewing every rank of his subjects with the same contemptuous indifference, asserted without control his sovereign pleasure of lust and luxury."* On the other hand, the history of individuals, of cities, and nations in the time of famines and plagues, shows that, with more intense suffering, the race would have been as if "drunken with wormwood." With a sky but a little more bright and fiery, or a little more clouded, the plants of the earth would wither; with an atmosphere possessing a little more or a little less of the vital element, the living creatures would perish; and it would seem as if, with a little more or a little less suffering in the world, man would lead an existence now troubled and now prostrated, in the alternate violence and exhaustion of a fever.

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* Decline and Fall, B. vi.

Such facts seem to indicate what would have been the state of the world, if mankind, as a whole, had been placed nearer the one extreme or the other. In the actual world there is a check upon both these extremes, but a check effectual only because they are extremes. There are means, in the circumambient conductors, of allowing an escape to the dangerous power which may collect at either pole. The indolence and luxuriousness of the prosperous classes, as seen, for instance, in the courts of Eastern kings, has no vitality in it, and it putrefies like the vegetation of warmer climates. Again, the sterner evils which proceed from poverty, from discontent, and suffering, clash and fight till they destroy each other and disappear. The extremes thus contain their own checks within themselves—both are suicidal; while the mean is kept in a healthy state by the skilful counteractions of God's natural providence.

The conclusion is now forcing itself upon us, that virtue, so called, may be upheld fully as much by the providence of God as by the strength of any inherent principle within; and that this world is kept from inextricable confusion by a thousand minute arrangements—as the ocean is held in its bed by a boundary of particles of sand.

And what must be the character and condition of our race when these restraints are withdrawn, as they must be in the other world? Some sensitive minds shrink from the very idea of a place of darkness to which the wicked are consigned. But when the bad are separated from the good, and are under no restraint, we cannot conceive how there should be anything else than hopeless madness and violence. Men need only to be abandoned by God to create before the time a hell on this earth.

There may be a time coming in our world's history when, these restraints being removed, human wickedness shall reign without control; when the convulsions hitherto confined to particular spots shall become extensive as the world; and when such scenes as those presented in the fall of Jerusalem, at the close of the Jewish dispensation, shall be acted on a larger theatre, with all men as actors, and the universe as spectators. It has often been remarked, that revolutions accomplish in the moral world what thunder-storms do in the natural world; and it has been observed by Niebuhr, that plagues, such as that at Athens in the time of Pericles, and at Rome in the age of M. Aurelius, are the termination of one course of things and the commencement of another; and it is conceivable that this present dispensation of things may terminate in a convulsion, which is to be the forerunner of that era of peace which is to close our world's history. The pillars on which this present imperfect dispensation is supported may be pulled down, to bury in the ruins all that is evil, and as the precursor of a period of peace and glorious liberty.

SECT. V.—ADAPTATION OF THIS WORLD TO MAN, CONSIDERED AS A FALLEN BEING.

We now return to a subject which came frequently before us in the first book. Let us inquire what light the arrangements of heaven, which we have been considering, throw upon the character of man, or rather upon the view which God seems to take of the character of man. We are aware that the argument cannot be conclusive, till we take a separate survey of human nature on independent evidence. But still it may be confirmatory of the inferences to be drawn in the subsequent book, to find all other roads leading to the same point—all the lines converging to one centre. It is not needful to repeat what was said in the first book as to the various indications given in God's works of a holy God, a moral governor, and a fallen world. We feel now, however, as if, after the survey taken, we were able to bring new considerations, and old considerations with new force, to support the doctrine which then recommended itself on the ground of general probability.

Looking at the arrangements which God hath made in the physical world, we find them to be *actually* employed in guiding and restraining mankind. Looking at their structure and organization, we find them *fitted* to accomplish these ends. We are entitled, then, to conclude that they are *intended* to effect these purposes. We say *intended;* for while man may perform acts fitted to produce a given end without knowing it, there is room for no such distinction in reference to the doings of the omniscient and omnipresent God. We are convinced that those skilful arrangements, general and particular, by which mankind are trained to outward decency of deportment, and restrained from evil, are all contemplated and designed. But would such a system of aids and checks have been required in an unfallen world? Would it have been permitted in a world in which all was pure and holy?

Let us recall the process by which it is demonstrated that a God exists. It is by a brief argument, founded on the design which everywhere meets the eye. But, as we survey the phenomena that indicate design, we find them indicating not only design in general, but to a special end in reference to mankind. Some of them have evidently a benevolent purpose, as the beautiful revolution of the seasons, providing sustenance for God's creatures. Others just as palpably have it in view to keep men externally virtuous when virtuous principle might fail, to restrain evil when the hatred of sin might exercise little or no influence, and to arrest the consequences which might follow from human folly. Prove to us that God's providence is so ordered as to institute a special provision for the wants of his creatures, and we shall prove, by a similar and as large an induction of facts, that it has also respect to the limiting and correcting of human vice and folly.

The argument may be otherwise stated. Lord Brougham, in his Natural Theology, when proving that there is benevolent design in the works of God, argues in the following way:—"Had I to accomplish this purpose, I would have used some such means; or, had I used these means, I should have thought I was accomplishing some such purpose. Perceiving the adaptation of the means to the end, the inference is, that some being has acted as we should ourselves act, and with the same views."* Suppose, for instance, that it was our design to give an easy and pleasant motion to a certain member of the body, could we have used a more suitable instrumentality than that actually employed in the joints, with the attached muscles of the human frame?

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* Nat. Theo., p. i. § 3.

Let us carry out this mode of reasoning, and apply it to the providence of God, as the author now quoted does, to particular parts of organisms. Suppose that it had been our design to produce right conduct in persons in whom right principle was weak or wanting, to arrest and control human action when it tended to evil, and to stop man in his career of wickedness—could we have employed a readier or a more effectual means? It does look as if God had constructed his providence with a special view to a race considered by him as prone to evil, and to be kept from it by external restraint, fully as much as by internal principle. It would appear as if God employed such an instrumentality, that he might be governor of the world in spite of human rebellion.

Let us examine some of the arrangements of Providence which seem specially to have this end in view. There is the constitution of things, according to which man has a motive to labour, and is constrained to toil. The motive to labour and industry is furnished by the scheme of general laws, observing and acting on which, he can secure the object which he needs or desires. But there is not only an encouragement to labour, there is a compulsion to toil, to severe toil, arising from the necessity of procuring sustenance to our bodily frames, and from the grudging manner in which our earth yields its fruits, never supplying more, after all the pains bestowed upon it, than can supply the wants of mankind. Why, we ask, this necessity for toil? Look at the labourer doggedly exerting himself, from early dawn till night, in turning over the surface of the ground, that he may allure it to give him the support which it will not yield unless coaxed and compelled. Or view this other individual levelling and embanking the earth, and digging deep mines, and all that he may secure some object which he cannot attain without a large payment in the sweat of his body. Enter one of our great factories, or the workshop of the engineer, and it does look as if the heathens conveyed a truth in mythic fable, when they represented Vulcan as expelled from heaven, and his servants, the Cyclopeans, consigned to their forge as a punishment. Whence the necessity for this excessive toil? Why did not God so construct this earth as that it would cheerfully yield its produce without any labour beyond what would be felt as a recreation? Could he not have fashioned the world at first with an apparatus fitted to save man from drudgery, and to enable him to exert his faculties of body and mind, without feeling the exercise to be grievous? Or could he not have given us other senses besides these five, to make us in some measure independent of the means which we are constrained by our position to employ, and which we feel to be so laborious? Or why, if mankind had to labour, was not the labour freed from all feeling of burden and fatigue?

Then there is not only the toil, there is also the pain to which man is subjected, as the necessary result of the arrangements, general and particular, of Providence. We cannot call human sorrows accidental, for they follow directly from causes which God himself has instituted. They are as immediately the result of the Divine appointment as the very blessings which flow to mankind in such happy abundance.

Man has been subjected to such incessant toil and misery in all ages of the world, and in all states of society. Take even the nations which have been most celebrated, and which have reached the highest pitch of civilisation. The greater achievements of man, his stupendous buildings, and his conquests, are apt so to dazzle the eyes that we cannot take a very narrow or correct inspection of them. As we feel that thirty centuries look down from the pyramids of Egypt, we are loath to make inquiry into the exact degradation of those millions of unhappy slaves and captives who toiled at the work. We willingly forget that the great mass of the people, consigned to perpetual drudgery, were mere tools in the hands of one man of exorbitant power, and that he may have been harassed by anxieties, fears, and suspicions, as much as those under him were oppressed by bodily toil.

In our admiration of the brilliant intellectual qualities of ancient Greece, we are not apt to remember that in Attica, while there were 120,000 citizens, there were 400,000 slaves; that in Sparta there were 150,000 citizens and 500,000 slaves. In Italy, so early as the time of the Gracchi, there were hardly any free husbandmen to be found; and in the city of Rome, nearly all manual labour was performed by slaves or freed men. Single masters in the Roman State are reported to have had so many as 10,000 or 20,000 slaves. Gibbon reckons that, about the time of the Christian era, there might be a slave for every freeman throughout the provinces of the empire. Blair calculates that, at the same period in Italy, there might be three times as many slaves as freemen. We need not draw any picture of the evils, physical, intellectual, and moral, to which the people would be exposed in such a state of society, as the mind of modern Europe is happily sensitive on the subject of slavery.

Contrasting ourselves with the ancients, we boast, and we are so far entitled to boast, of modern civilisation. In former ages, there was a much more limited middle class, and the lower orders had vastly less freedom and privilege. But this difference has at times been over estimated. In ancient times the labouring classes were supplied, by those who employed them, with at least the necessaries of life ; and there were architects, master-builders, and overseers of works, there were centurions and other army officials, all with large privileges, besides proprietors and occupants of the soil, together composing an important middle class. Then, it may be doubted whether many of the working classes in our own land and age have not as great an amount of toil, and as few bodily comforts, (we speak not now of higher privileges, in respect of which the modern is immeasurably superior,) to remunerate them, as the slaves in ancient Egypt or Rome. We are apt to be deluded when we take a survey of our own achievements, as much as when we examine those of the ancients. Our nearness to them impresses us unduly with their greatness. Ever since the days of Dr. Adam Smith, we have been seeking to promote a great abstraction which we call national wealth, and in looking to it we forget that to which it should be a mere stepping-stone—national happiness and national virtue. A traveller takes a rapid tour through the manufacturing districts of England, and visits the more important cities ; and he is filled with admiration of our large factories, our mighty machinery, and shipping, advertised to sail to every continent and island and important city in the world. But has he entered the houses in which the workmen live ?—has he sat at their boards and viewed their domestic arrangements ?—has he inquired into the character of woman as affected by the state of society or by her work, which takes her from her family, or renders her unfit for the management of it ?—has he inquired into the training of the rising generation, and estimated the temptations of the youth of both sexes at that critical period of life when feelings of pride and independence spring up simultaneously with the rise of the lustful passions ?—has he done as the poet Crabbe did, when, after Sir Walter Scott had shown him the beauties of nature and art for which the metropolis of Scotland is so distinguished, he was not satisfied till he visited those humble and humbling abodes to which the poor and outcast had been driven by crime or misfortune ?—has he gone down into those crowded lanes of our cities, whose physical is not so polluted as their moral atmosphere, but in which the heart—larger than even the imagination—of Chalmers used to feel a livelier interest than in the gorgeous scenes of nature which he so much admired ? If he has done this, he will be ready to doubt whether any country, in any age, has produced a more demoralized and debauched population than the masses to be found in some of our large cities, (and not a few of our agricultural labourers are no better,) possessing, as they do, little of civilisation but its vices, and the knowledge and wealth of the classes above them producing in them only jealousy and discontent.

The imagination is apt to be still more excited by the stirring incidents of war. When we read in their own language, whose march is as magnificent as that of their armies, of the conquests of the Romans, we forget at what an expense of human suffering the victories were gained. We do not, for instance, trouble ourselves to conceive of the misery which must have resulted from Paulus Emilius bringing 150,000 captives from his wars in Epirus, and selling them as prize-money for his soldiers ; or from Julius Cæsar taking captive half a million of human beings in his Gallic wars, and selling them into slavery. In thinking of the age of Augustus, there are few persons who give any prominence to the circumstance recorded by a historian—that fathers were in the habit of mutilating the bodies of their sons, that they might not be liable to serve in those Roman armies, which were the terror of half the world. We reflect little on the means, terrible as the very wars themselves, which were required to keep up the warlike spirit, as when, in one of the exhibitions of Trajan, no fewer than 10,000 gladiators were made to fight in the view of the Roman people.

It is an instructive circumstance, that those writers who give us the most heart-stirring description of battles commonly stop short at the point at which the battle is ended. It is needful, for the object which they have in view, to interest us in warlike achievements, which compose so fearfully large a portion of the matter of history; but when they have carried us through the thickest of the fight to the moment at which the shout of victory is raised by the one party, and the other party are seen fleeing before their victors, they find it needful to let fall the curtain when our eyes are about to rest on the bodies of the dying and the dead. A walk over the field of battle a day or two after the conflict is closed, about the time when the carrion, scenting the battle now over, as the war-horse is said to scent it beforehand, begin to pay their visits, might serve to dissipate the illusions which the pomp and circumstance of war have gathered around all military exploits. A description of it, as it then presented itself, would be sufficient to affect every sensitive mind with sentiments of deepest disgust at war—as deep as that bodily emotion which is felt when the nostrils are saluted by the polluted atmosphere, and the eyes fall on the blood, now cold and clotted, which has streamed from the hearts of thousands, whose mangled remains lie exposed in the face of heaven, not a few of them with the fierce passions of war strongly marked on their countenances. Historians are not careful to tell us how the shout of triumph has often been answered back, and all but drowned, by the wailings of the wounded and dying. They describe the rejoicings and processions of the victorious nation, and the triumph given to their general; but they do not conduct us to the abodes of the widows who are mourning over husbands, who died with none to stanch their wounds or close their eyes, and orphans, all the more to be pitied because they are unconscious of the loss which they have sustained. The moralist must needs supply what the writers of the school of romance feel that they dare not describe without depriving their writings of half their charm, and must paint the miseries which wars have generally brought in their train, in industry checked, in the arts neglected, in countries depopulated, in famine propagating itself in widening circles, and pestilence showing itself a more potent destroyer of men than the conqueror who boasts of the victory.

We are quite aware that such toil, such wars, nay, that such misery, are needful; and that if we could take them away, we would not better, but rather deteriorate, man's condition. We acknowledge that he would have been more wretched than he is, had he not been placed in circumstances which compel him to exert himself in bodily or mental labour. There may have been mercy as well as judgment in that act of God by which he drove fallen man out of paradise. With man's present nature, an Eden would not have been suited to him as a place of habitation: so situated, he would have been obliged, under ever-recurring ennui, to say with Shenstone, in the midst of the earthly paradise in which he embowered himself, to lead there an existence as useless as it was wretched—"Every little uneasiness is sufficient to introduce a whole train of melancholy considerations, and to make me utterly dissatisfied with the life which I now lead, and the life which I foresee I shall lead." We are convinced, besides, that if man were not obliged to toil for his bodily sustenance and comfort, his native restlessness would impel him to deeds which would throw society into hopeless disorder, and deluge the earth with blood.—

"That like an emmet thou must ever toil,
Is a sad sentence of an ancient date—
And, certes, there is for it reason great;
For though it sometimes makes thee weep and wail,
And curse thy stars, and early rise and late,
Withouten that would come an heavier bale—
Loose life, unruly passions, and diseases pale."*

We are also aware that wars, while at all times evils in themselves, are often necessary evils—necessary to save nations from intolerable oppression and bondage. We believe further, that were all liability to bodily suffering taken away, this world would teem with crime terminating in the most excruciating mental anguish. We are convinced that man's exposure to bodily pain saves him from much torture of mind, and from vice which would render this world more offensive to pure spirits than the most infected lazar-house is to the man of sensitive organs and feelings.

Speaking of labour, Carlyle says, "How as a free-flowing channel, dry and torn by noble force through the sour mud-swamp of one's existence, like an ever-deepening river, there it runs and flows, draining off the sour festering water from the roots of the remotest grass-blade, making, instead of pestilential swamp, a green fruitful meadow, with its ever-flowing stream. How blessed for the meadow itself, let the stream and its value be great or small!"† But whence, we ask, this mud-swamp and sour festering waters requiring such a force-torn channel to carry them off? Man must labour hard in this world to ward off evils ready to attack him, as the Kamschatkan must exercise himself to keep his frame warm; but why? because both one and other are in an ungenial clime. We know that it is ordained of God that a certain amount of pleasure should attend on labour; but still, it is by a kind of after-appointment, and as a recompence for evil, as Venus was given to Vulcan; and the union, after all, is far from being close or constant.

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* Thomson's Castle of Indolence.

† Past and Present.

Acknowledging the necessity for such evils, we ask, Whence the necessity? In the very nature of things, says some one. We meet the declaration by a direct contradiction. Surely it is possible for God to create and govern a world in which there are no such necessary evils, because there is no evil at all. Whence, we again ask, this necessity? From the state and character of man, is the answer to which we must at last come. Such is the native temper and spirit of man, that if not constrained to be busy, he would be wretched and vicious beyond endurance. Such is the very nature of man, that wars, pestilences, and famines, are necessary to prevent evils greater than themselves.

But what a dark and melancholy picture is thus given of the heart and tendencies of man! God indicates the view he takes of man's character by the way in which he treats him. How fearful the disease which requires such remedies! How daring the criminality which demands from a God, whose benevolence is infinite, such chains to bind, such prison walls to confine it! The evils must be great beyond measurement, which demand evils acknowledged to be so great to counteract and punish them.

SECT. VI.—EXPLANATION OF THE MYSTERIES OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE FURNISHED BY THE SINFULNESS OF MAN'S CHARACTER.

"One would imagine," says the representative of scepticism, in Hume's Dialogues on Natural Religion,* "that this world had not received the last hand of the Maker, so little finished is every part, and so coarse are the strokes with which it is executed. Thus the winds are requisite to convey the vapours along the surface of the globe, and to assist men in navigation;

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* Part XI.

but how oft, rising up to tempests and hurricanes, do they become pernicious! Rains are necessary to nourish all the plants and animals of the earth; but how often are they defective!—how often excessive! Heat is requisite to all life and vegetation, but it is not always found in due proportion. On the mixture and secretion of the humours and juices of the body depend the health and prosperity of the animal; but the parts perform not regularly their proper function." A living philosopher of a different school, founding on such observations, boldly declares, that even human wisdom could improve the universe, which he therefore maintains can afford no proof of Divine wisdom; and, as evidence of his assertion, he refers to certain delicate organs of the body, as the eye and liver, so apt to go wrong, and which could easily have had substituted for them an organ not liable to disease. "It cannot be doubted, as it appears to me, that scientific genius, even in biology, is sufficiently developed and emancipated to enable us to conceive after the laws of biology of certain organizations which differ notably from all those which we know, and which shall be incontestably superior to them in the point of view in question, without these ameliorations being inevitably compensated in other respects by equivalent imperfections."* The common answer to these objections, that the evils referred to are the incidental results of general laws good in themselves, we cannot hold to be adequate; for we have seen that God can arrange his general laws so as to make one law counteract the evil that would flow from the unbending operation of another. As Hume remarks, "A being who knows the secret springs of the universe might easily, by particular volitions, turn all these accidents to the good of mankind." We must regard these supposed evils as following from the arrangements of heaven, just as much as the physical blessings. We must see God in the hurricane as well as in the gentler breezes—in the floods as well as the softer showers—in the scorching drought as well as in the genial heat—in disease as well as in health. So far as these evils are merely physical, or bear a physical aspect, or are connected with other physical phenomena, they are not evils. In itself, and apart from its relation to man, on whom it may inflict pain, or whose plans it may disturb, the tempest is no more an evil than the calm. It is simply in their reference to man, that these parts of nature become apparent evils. Now, we think that we may discover in the nature and character of man, in reference to whom it is supposed that they are evils, the ground on which the infliction of them proceeds. Such is the character of man, that it is needful to have the storm as well as the zephyr—the drought and the deluge as well as the beneficent shower—sudden failures in our bodily organism and lengthened disease, as well as health and the buoyant flow of the animal spirits. Does it not appear as if the mysteries of the physical government of God could be all explained by their reference to the character of man ? We wonder that there should be such sudden calamities and judicial inflictions. But the true wonder would be, the character of man being thus degraded, were God to rule this world as if it had never fallen. All these occurrences seem strange and mysterious, only on the supposition that man is spotlessly pure. Take with us the fact that man has rebelled against God, and these difficulties instantly vanish.

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* Philosophie Positive, vol. iii. p. 463.

Two evils exist in this world—the one physical and the other moral—the evil of pain and the evil of sin. We discover that these are evils by the very constitution of the human mind, which shrinks from pain and condemns transgression. Of these two, physical evil is the one which seems to bear hardest against the Divine government. Not that it is the worse of the two, but it is the one with which God has the most immediate concern. The blame of the moral evil may undoubtedly be cast on the individual who commits it. To deny this, is to deny the possibility of free agency and responsibility on the part of the creature. It is surely possible for God to give free agency to an intelligent creature, such free agency as implies accountability; and the creature, so endowed, cannot throw the blame of the sin he commits upon another. But the infliction of pain proceeds directly from God; and the blame of it, if blame there be, must lie upon him. He who would justify the ways of God to man, must be careful to defend the Divine government at the point at which suffering is inflicted.

While led to regard both pain and sin as evils, the mind looks upon them in two very different lights. It avoids the one, but it pronounces its condemnation upon the other. Not only so, but it announces in a way not to be misunderstood, that physical evil is the natural consequence and punishment of moral evil. The guilty man stands in constant fear of a penalty to follow; and the conscience approves of appropriate punishment being inflicted on sin. Such is the very constitution of man's nature. It not only declares sin to be an evil, and pain to be an evil, but declares that the one is the proper punishment of the other. It seems, then, as if we could free ourselves from many of the difficulties connected with the infliction of pain, provided we could refer it to moral evil as its source. This, we are aware, is widely different from the view adopted by the superficial thinkers of this age. They justify the infliction of suffering on the ground of its ultimately producing a greater amount of happiness; and they speak as if happiness were the only good, and pain the only evil. But certainly this is not the doctrine sanctioned by the intuitive and fundamental principles of man's nature. Place man in a position in which he must choose between sin and pain, and the conscience will at once announce that the latter should be the alternative adopted. The mind, in short, declares that there is a greater good than mere happiness, and a greater evil than pain, and that suffering is the appropriate punishment of transgression.

The spirit of the present age is much opposed to everything *punitive.* It is the natural recoil of the human mind from the barbarities, the cruelty, and revenge of former generations. The general rule is now laid down, that human punishment ought to be strictly reformatory, and have in view solely the welfare of the individual and of society. We are not disposed to cavil at this principle. We tremble at the idea of man being made the avenger of the laws of the Governor of the universe. The magistrate has no doubt a delegated power from heaven; but it were as safe, to say the least of it, in him to confine its exercise within the limits prescribed by the principle that the reformation of society should be his end and aim. But there is a previous inquiry, Is it allowable that the magistrate punish *except when punishment is deserved?* We hold it to be demonstrable, that he is not at liberty to punish, unless a crime meriting punishment has been committed. He is not permitted, it is manifest, to inflict pain *merely* for the good of society; to visit, for example, with imprisonment or death, an individual who has innocently committed an injurious act. True it is that he does not punish sin, simply as sin, (for this is the prerogative of God,) but rather because it has inflicted injury on society; but it is also true, that he dare not impose penalties, except where guilt has been contracted. Thus, in the very power delegated to, and exercised by, the magistrate, we discover traces of the connexion between sin and suffering.

But because punishment, inflicted by man, aims at reformation, it does not therefore follow that this must be the sole end of punishment inflicted by God. God may not choose to delegate to man a power of punishment which he has no right of himself to inflict, and which he would most certainly abuse were it intrusted to him. But as God has this power—and our moral nature justifies him in exercising it—he may righteously use it in his holy government. It is only on the supposition that he does use it, that we can justify to our moral nature the dealings of God in inflicting such wide-spread misery upon mankind. Without taking this circumstance into account, we feel as if we could not justify the method of God's government to the nature which he has implanted within us.

We justify the infliction of suffering upon man, on the ground of the existence of moral evil; and we throw the blame of the moral evil upon the individual who commits it. But does some one say, that our feelings rise against this view ?—we reply, that there are more solid principles in the human mind than mere floating feelings—and it is to these that we appeal. Is it insisted that we justify all this to the understanding ?—we answer, that there are questions involved which do not come directly under the cognizance of the understanding, any more than questions of the beauty and deformity of objects. We reckon it enough to justify the moral character of God to that moral faculty which God has placed in our breast, and placed there for this very purpose, that it may judge of actions and of character.

That faculty now falls under our notice.

METHOD OF THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT.

BOOK THIRD.

PARTICULAR INQUIRY INTO THE PRINCIPLES OF THE HUMAN MIND THROUGH WHICH GOD GOVERNS MANKIND.

We are now to turn from the world without to the world within us—truly the larger and more wonderful of the two; for every one of man's thoughts is in its very nature more elevated than the most exalted of material objects, and his imaginations reach infinitely farther than the bodily eye, assisted by the telescope, can range. This latter world, however, submits itself to examination more reluctantly than the other. When we would catch the mind in any one state of thought or feeling, we find that in the very act we have so far modified the thought and feeling, and that, Proteus-like, they change their form when we are about to seize them. Its living feelings die under our hand as we would dissect them. In order to detect its workings, we must use greater skill than Huber did when, after trying device upon device, he succeeded at last in finding the way in which bees construct their ingenious work. We cannot at every time invert our eye and look into this deep. It cannot be inspected when it is muddy with earthly ingredients, and chafed with passion. Still, there are times when, calm and serene as a placid lake in summer, we can look far down into its depths, and behold its thronging life and exhaustless treasures. "Its facts," says Cousin, "are complicated, fugitive, obscure, and all but beyond the power of apprehension from their deep seat in the mind;" but he adds, "the consciousness which is applied to them is an instrument of extreme delicacy—it is a microscope applied to things infinitely small." By the help, too, of the memory, we can recall, with the view of inspecting them, the thoughts and feelings which passed through the mind even when most agitated. Nor is it to be forgotten that, to some extent, we can experiment upon the mind, and present objects fitted to call its powers into operation, and exhibit them in exercise. There is a yet farther means of acquiring a knowledge of mind, and this is, by means of the expression of man's cogitations and sentiments in his words and writings. The quiet conversation of a friend, and the burning words of the orator and poet, alike reveal what is passing within.

In a Treatise like this, however, it is not needful to investigate the human mind any farther than may be requisite to discover its relation to God, the Governor of the universe. We do not require to take a survey of all its powers, nor to enter upon any subtle or minute analysis of them. Our attention is to be very much confined to those principles through which God governs, or may be supposed to govern, mankind. As in the last book we took a survey of the works and laws of God in their reference to man, we are now to contemplate the human mind in its relation to God as its Governor.

CHAPTER I.

MAN'S ORIGINAL AND INDESTRUCTIBLE MORAL NATURE.

SECT. I.—THE WILL, OR THE OPTATIVE FACULTY—CONDITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY.

It is needful, at this place, to draw out some sort of chart of the various departments of the mind. The aim of all such classifications should be to bring out to view the leading attributes of the soul. The following may serve our present purpose. There are—

I. The Simple Cognitive Faculties, by which we attain the knowledge of individual objects in the concrete, as, (1.) Sense-Perception, by which we know material substances in certain modes, or in the exercise of certain qualities; and, (2.) Self-consciousness, by which we know self in certain states.

II. THE RETENTIVE AND REPRODUCTIVE POWERS, as, (1.) Memory, which recalls what has been before the mind, with a belief that it has been before the mind in time past; (2.) Imagination, which puts what has been before the mind in new and non-existing forms. Both of these possess an Imaging or Pictorial power. When this might fail, we have, (3.) The Symbolic power, which enables us to represent objects by signs.

Above these presentative and representative powers, we have,

III. THE CORRELATIVE FACULTIES, discovering such relations as that, (1.) Of whole and parts; (2.) Of sameness and difference, in respect of such qualities as space, time, quantity, and active property; and, (3.) Of cause and effect.*

IV. THE MORAL FACULTY, determining in regard to certain mental states, that they are right or wrong.

Associated with the exercise of these powers, we have,

V. THE EMOTIONS, attaching us to certain objects, and withdrawing us from others.

VI. THE WILL OR OPTATIVE POWER, choosing or rejecting among the objects presented to the mind.

It should be added, that there are laws of association determining the order of succession of the states produced by these various powers.

In allotting a separate place to each of these powers, we do not mean to affirm that they act separately. The exercises of several of them are often mingled in one mental act, and some of them, such as self-consciousness, the emotions, and the will, never act alone. Still it is needful to make some such classification, if we would exhibit the peculiarities of the human mind. We do not pretend that the above is a complete manifestation of all the attributes of the mind, but we believe it to be impossible, when we look to the full revelations of consciousness, to resolve any one of these into any of the others, or into all the others. Any proposed reduction of them into one another, or into simpler elements, may be shewn to be delusive, and to derive its plausibility not from explaining, but overlooking the peculiarities of the faculty. In this Book we have to do mainly with the Emotions, the Will, and the Conscience, as constituting what may be appropriately called the Motive Powers of the mind. Of these three, we are required to consider in a special manner, merely the two last, which are truly the moral powers of humanity.

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* See in connexion with this Scheme of the Intellectual Faculties, a SCHEME OF INTUITIVE INTELLECTUAL PRINCIPLES considered psychologically in APPENDIX VI.

These three, the Emotions, the Will, the Conscience, are all included in the popular word "heart," and in the still looser phrase "feeling." Much confusion has arisen from not distinguishing between these different powers, and from designating them all by one name, not inexpressive, but still very indefinite. How unsatisfactory the old theological controversy, as to whether faith is an exercise of the head or heart, when the precise boundary line between the head and heart is not drawn, when what is embraced in the heart is not unfolded, nor the various affections denoted by the word feeling carefully distinguished?* We have always felt that there was a great vagueness in the controversy stirred up by Jacobi, when, in order to save philosophy from the rigid intellectualism of Kant, he called in Feeling or Faith, but without giving an inductive exposition of its elements, and of the several laws of each. With a real difference of opinion, there is a vast amount of logomachy in the dispute of the present day, as to whether religion is a matter of the intellect or of the feelings. When physical investigators appeal to a law, they are expected to be prepared to specify its nature; and it is time that a similar rule were laid down for mental inquiry, and for theology, so far as it makes use of the facts of our moral nature. We are persuaded that no one can reason clearly or satisfactorily about the heart or feeling, who does not recognise at least three distinct elements as contained in it, the conscience, the will proper, and the emotions. He who would class all these in one generic word, will find himself in metaphysical, ethical, and theological speculation, often predicating of one of them, say the feelings, what is true only of another, say the will, or of all what is true only of one, say the conscience. Thus when we affirm that desire is an affection of the heart, we must be careful to explain whether we mean the emotions or the will. When we talk of moral good being seated in the heart, we should distinguish between what we refer to feeling, what to volition, what to the decisions of the moral faculty. As to faith, the belief in the unseen, the absent, nay, at times, the incomprehensible, it is fully as much a constituent of the intelligence, as of the heart or affections.

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* Saving faith seems to be, the consent of the will to the assent of the understanding, and commonly (not always, because of the nature of the objects contemplated, accompanied by emotion. If this view be correct, it is the consent of the will, which constitutes the true difference between speculative and true faith.

In taking up the subject of the Will, we regard it as of great moment, that it should be looked upon as a distinct power or energy of the mind. Not that we mean to represent it as exercised apart from all other faculties; on the contrary, it blends itself with every other power. It associates itself with our intellectual decisions on the one hand, and our emotional attachments on the other, but contains an important element which cannot be resolved into either the one or other, or into both combined. The other powers, such as the sensibility, the reason, the conscience, may influence the will, but they cannot constitute it, nor yield its peculiar workings. We have only by consciousness to look into our souls as the will is working, to discover a power, which though intimately connected with the other attributes of mind, even as they are closely related to each other, does yet stand out distinctly from them, with its peculiar functions and its own province. We hold that there cannot be an undertaking more perilous to the best interests of philosophy and humanity, than the attempt to resolve the will into anything inferior to itself. In particular it may be, and should be distinguished from that with which it has been so often confounded, the emotional part of man's nature.

The following seem to be the characteristics of the Emotions. First, there is an attachment to, or a repugnance from, certain objects contemplated,—there is a drawing towards them when under one kind of feeling, and a drawing from them, when under another description of feeling. Under the influence of hope, for instance, we, as it were, stretch forth our hands towards the object, and in fear we shrink from it. Secondly, the mind, when under feelings, is in an excited or moved state—hence the name, emotions. This excitement is characterized by the thoughts running with great rapidity in a particular train or channel, and by a marked influence on certain bodily organs. These marks are to be found in all the common emotions, such as joy and grief, hope and fear, good will and hatred.

The essence of Will, on the other hand, is choice, or the opposite of choice, rejection. It takes various forms, and may have degrees of intensity; if the object be present it is adoption or consent, and if the object be absent it is wish or desire, and when it leads to action it is volition, but under all its forms it is characterized by active selection or rejection. This is an element not found in emotion. There may be lively attachments and excitement, when there is no choice. Nor, on the other hand, are the peculiarities of emotion necessarily present in the exercises of the voluntary power of the mind. We may choose objects to which we are not instinctively attached, nay, to which we have rather a natural feeling of aversion. The will is often in its highest exercise when it is resisting the tide of emotional impulse. Nor is the mind necessarily in a moved state when it forms its resolutions; on the contrary, the common volitions, as when we will to move the members of our body, are unattended by any excitement, and our strongest determinations are often taken in our calmest moods.*

We think it high time that writers on mental science should be prepared to admit that there is a separate class of mental affections, which we may call by the generic term Will, or, as we would prefer, the Optative states of mind. These are very numerous, and differ from each other in degree and in certain minor qualities, but they all agree in this, that they contain choice or rejection. In this class we include not only volition or the determination to act, but preference, adoption, if the object be present, and wish, desire, if it be absent.

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* Our older divines and moralists were accustomed to speak of the will as a separate attribute of the mind. In this country and in France, later metaphysicians, in the natural recoil from the excessive multiplication of original principles, have gone to a worse extreme than that which they sought to avoid, and have laboured to resolve the will into mere sensibility. In the writings of the schools of Condillac, of Brown, and of James Mill, we find wish and desire represented as emotions, and volition as the prevailing desire. It is to the credit of the speculators of Germany, that they have commonly given a lofty sphere to the will, though in some cases they have confounded it with the activity of the mind. We have now in France and in this country a happy reaction against the over-refinement of analysis which explains away a principle by overlooking its characteristic quality. Cousin, Jouffroy, and others in France,—Chalmers, Payne, and others in Britain, while they still speak of desire as a mere emotion, take pains to shew that volition is something more than desire, and remove it out of the category of the common emotions altogether. We are not satisfied that they have drawn the line of distinction at the proper place, we are not convinced that desire is a mere emotion, or that the all important distinction is between desire and volition; still it is pleasant to find these eminent men striving to save morality, by representing the will as an unresolvable and independent potency.

Take, for instance, a wish, the earnest wish that this dear friend at present in ill health may recover. Every one will admit that there is more here than mere intellect. No doubt there is intelligence, the conception of the friend in certain circumstances, and the possibility of his being in other circumstances; but it will be readily acknowledged that there is more than mere intellectual conception. We proceed a step farther, and affirm that there is more than mere emotion, than a mere glow of heart, or feeling of delight and attachment. There is all this, but there is something more, which the glow or the attachment may be fitted to produce, (in a mind *capable of desire,*) but which it cannot constitute. Just as the intellectual conception of our friend is fitted to raise the emotion, which, however, is something more than the intellectual conception, so the emotion is fitted to raise the desire, which desire, however, contains an element not in the emotion. It is not difficult to conceive of a mind having the emotion, and yet incapable of the desire. Just as it is possible to conceive of a being with intellect without emotions, so it is possible to conceive of a being possessed of sensibility without being able to form a volition or even a wish. The nerves of motion in the bodily frame do not differ more from the muscles of mere sensation, than do the volitions and desires of the mind from the mere feelings of delight, interest, and attachment, experienced in what are called emotions.

Later mental inquirers are generally disposed to admit that the volition, the positive determination to take a particular step, the resolution, for instance, to give a sum of money to take our friend to a warmer climate for the restoration of his health, is more than a mere emotion. But if we are thus to constitute a separate attribute to which to refer volition, it is worthy of being inquired whether we should not arrange under the same head, wishes, desires, and the cognate states, as being more closely allied in their nature to volition than to the common emotions. Wherever there is wish, we hold that there is more than mere emotion—more than a mere receptive state of the soul; there is a voluntary exercise of the mind. Whenever we go beyond the indicative or the subjunctive to the optative mood, we come into the region of a higher attribute. As long as we dwell with pain on the contemplation of our friend in distress, or with pleasure on his anticipated recovery, there is evidently nothing but emotion. But we take a farther step, a most important step—a step which, when we take it, demonstrates that we are higher in the scale of being—when we positively wish that our friend may recover.

It is the will which determines what is to be preferred or rejected. Doubtless the other powers of the mind must furnish the objects. The physical or mental sensibility must announce what is painful and what is pleasurable ; the conscience declares what is morally right, and what is morally wrong ; the reason may proclaim what is true, and what is false ; but it is not the province of one or all these to make the choice. By the sensibility, the mind feels pleasure and pain ; but it is another power which chooses the former, and avoids the latter. So far as the true is preferred to the false, or the right to the wrong, or the pleasurable to the right, it is by the exercise, not of the reason, or the conscience, or the sensibility, but of the will. Nor is it saying anything to the point to declare, that the will always chooses the greatest good ; for it is the will that determines it, in this sense, to be good, and the greatest good. The will, no doubt, does prefer the pleasurable in itself, to the painful, but it is because it wills to do so. It may prefer, as it ought, the morally right to the pleasurable ; but it is equally possible it may prefer the pleasant to the morally right ; and whichever of these courses it pursues, it is in the sovereign exercise of its own choice.

We hold the will to be a general potency or attribute of mind, and its operations manifested under various forms. When the object is present, it may adopt it : when there are two contending objects present, it may prefer one to the other : when the object mental or material is absent, it may wish it or desire it, or resolve to take available steps to obtain it. When inconsistent objects are contemplated, and the mind is inclined to choose both, there may for a time be clashing or contest. When there is no collision of desires, or when the object of one of the contending desires is declared to be better or best, it chooses the object, and if present it seizes it, or if absent and attainable, it determines to take the steps necessary to secure it, which consummating act is commonly called volition. According to this representation there may often be a collision of desires, often the collision of volition with inconsistent desires. There is therefore a real distinction between desire and volition ; there may be a difference of degree, and there is always a difference in this, that volition goes on to action. But still we are persuaded that it is the same attribute of mind which says of this object, I adopt it, I prefer it, I wish it, I desire it, and which says, on there being no competing object, or no object esteemed equal to it, I determine to secure it.

It is of the utmost moment, even in the study of mind as a branch of science, to distinguish between the emotions and the will. We cannot comprehend man's nature and constitution, without conceiving of him as endowed with more than a mere emotional impressibility or receptive sensibility. True, we admire the loveliness of man's emotional nature more than we admire the loveliest of nature's loveliest regions, (indeed, philosophical analysis informs us, that external beauty is to some extent a mere transference of the inward feeling to the physical world.) The play of feeling has to us an intenser interest than the blowing of the breeze, or the rush of waters ; and the moving of man's emotional nature, more than even the deep waving of grain in summer, is indicative to us of riches and fruitfulness. Still, we stand up for the existence of a higher faculty, which, no doubt, proceeds upon emotion, but uses it all the while merely to rise to the exercise of its own independent functions.

But it is in ethical, more than in psychological inquiry, that the essential importance of this distinction becomes apparent. It may be doubted whether a person possessed of mere emotion could, in any circumstances, be regarded as responsible. It is when the element of the will, the optative, the power of choice, comes under the view, that we at once declare man to be a moral and responsible agent.

This may be the proper place for pointing out what we conceive to be the CONDITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY.

The fact that man's MIND IS SELF-ACTING, and, in particular, that the WILL IS SELF-ACTING—has its power or law in itself—is one of the conditions of responsibility. The other two conditions of responsibility seem to be CONSCIENCE and INTELLIGENCE. There must be conscience to distinguish between right and wrong, and announce to us which is the one and which is the other. There must also be such an amount of intelligence as to enable the mind to comprehend the true state of the case, and to separate, in the complex acts of life, that which is moral from that which is indifferent. These three, then, seem to be the essential elements or conditions of responsibility. Every human being, in a sane state of mind, is in possession of all the three. The maniac, in some cases, has lost the first, and has no proper power of will. The idiot, and in some cases the maniac, is without the third, or the power of discovering what is really embraced in a given phenomenon. Without the one or other of these necessary adjuncts, there is no room for the right exercise of the second—that is, the conscience; and the party therefore is not responsible. In the case of the maniac, as soon as intelligence and the power of will are restored, the conscience, which is the most indestructible faculty in the human soul, is in circumstances to renew its proper operation.

SECT. II.—FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY COMPATIBLE WITH THE CAUSAL CONNEXION OF GOD WITH HIS WORKS.

(1.) There is an essential freedom implied in every proper exercise of the will. For the proof of this we appeal to the consciousness, the universal consciousness. The fact here revealed by the consciousness is not to be set aside by a mere inferential logic. It is the business of philosophy fully to unfold this fact, not forgetting, at the same time, that it may be limited by at least one other, and that an equally well established fact. Necessarians, as it appears to us, have commonly either denied the fact, or narrowed it too much, while Libertarians have overlooked another and an equally important fact, by which the first is limited.

When it is said that the will is free, there is more declared than simply that we can *do* what we please. It is implied, farther, that the choice lies within the voluntary power of the mind, and that we could have willed otherwise if we had pleased. The mind has not only the power of action, but the anterior, and far more important power of choice. The freedom of the mind does not consist in the effect following the volition, as, for instance, in the movement of the arm following the will to move it, but in the power of the mind to form the volition in the exercise of its voluntary functions. That man has not scanned the full phenomena which consciousness discloses, who denies this the inherent power of the mind, not only to act as it chooses, but to form its own independent choice. In making this choice we are no doubt swayed by considerations, but these have their force given to them by the will itself, which may set a high value upon them, but which may also, if it please, set them at defiance.

But there are persons who tell us that the mind is swayed by motives, and that therefore it cannot be free. To this we answer, that the word "motive" is ambiguous. It may mean a mere incitement presented by something out of the will, as, for instance, when some sensual indulgence is thrown open to us. In this sense we maintain that the volitions of the mind are not caused by the mere incitement. This incitement in such a case can act only when the will lends its sanction to it, and chooses to partake of the sensual gratification. This inducement will be powerful with one man, and will have no power with another man; and the cause of the difference will be found not in the mere incitement, which in both cases is the same, but in the state of the will of the two individuals. But then it will be said, that the man who refuses the gratification, equally with the man who yields to it, is swayed by an inducement, possibly by a respect to the law of God, which forbids the indulgence in the circumstances. Very true, we reply; but what has decided between the two competing inducements, but the will, which has chosen to yield to the one and to resist the other? The word "motive," we have said, is ambiguous. If it means the sum of all the causes producing the final volition, it is evident that the motive ever determines the volitions; but then in this sum of causes the main element is the will itself. If by motive is meant merely the causes acting independently of the will, then we maintain that they do not determine the volition—they merely call into exercise the will, which is the true determining power.*

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* Jonathan Edwards, the most profound writer who has treated of this sub ect, and with whose views in regard to the reign of causation in the will we agree, has defined motive. "By motive, I mean the whole of that which moves, excites, or invites the mind to volition; whether that be one thing singly or many things conjunctly. Many particular things may concur and unite their strength to induce the mind, and when it is so, all together are as one complex motive. And when I speak of the strongest motive, I have respect to the strength of the whole that

We may distinguish between the general faculty of will as a property of mind, and the particular volitions or acts of the will, just as we distinguish between gravitation and its specific acts, say in moving some particle of matter. The particular volitions have all a cause, but the main part of the cause is to be found in the faculty of will, and in the nature of the will. We maintain that these volitions are not determined by mere sensations from without, as the philosophers of the French sensational school and the followers of Robert Owen assert, nor by the last act of the judgment, nor by emotions within the mind, as the higher order of British and American Necessarians seem to assert, but by the very nature of the will itself as an independent self-acting faculty. In this high and important sense, the will may be said to possess a self-determining power, that is, a power of determining its own volitions.*

All this seems to be revealed by the consciousness, and is not to be set aside by logical ingenuities, and the starting of sophistical difficulties, derived from the operation of mere physical nature, or the exercise of the other faculties of the human mind, which differ from the will just as the will differs from them. It is true that this analysis, as we shall immediately see, removes the great question discussed between the Necessarians and Libertarians but a stage farther back. But there is this great advantage in removing the question thus far back, that we leave in front of it, and untouched by it, the faculty of will, a faculty of a most peculiar kind, a faculty constrained by nothing out of itself, but following its own free and independent laws. There

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operates to produce a particular act of volition, whether that be the strength of one thing alone or of many together." (Freedom of the Will, p. 1, s. 2.) In asserting that the will is swayed by motives as thus defined, we are affirming nothing to the point. It is said that the will is swayed by the motive; and when we ask what the motive is, it is answered, All that sways the will. We are making no progress; we are swinging upon a hinge, in advancing and readvancing such maxims. The motive should be divided into two parts, that which is without the will, and that which is within the will; the latter of these being, we maintain, the main element. Sir W. Hamilton has been so kind as direct the author's attention to the definition by Leibnitz, in one of his letters to Clarke. "The motives comprehend all the dispositions which the mind can have to act voluntarily; for they include not only the reasons, but also the inclinations, arising from the passions or other preceding impressions," (see extract at length in Hamilton's Reid, footnotes, pp. 610, 611.)

* See OPERATION OF CAUSE AND EFFECT IN THE HUMAN MIND, in APPENDIX VII.

is a truth here, to which, in our humble opinion, Necessarians have not given sufficient prominence. This truth furnishes a sufficiently broad basis to allow the grand doctrines of moral agency and accountability to be reared upon it. We see that when man possesses such a faculty, he cannot be represented as a mere machine. He is not treated by his Maker, nor should he be treated by others, as a machine. We see, too, that whatever be the point at which God, as Governor, is connected with the human will, it is beyond the field in which moral agency and responsibility lie.

(2.) The full fact revealed by Consciousness has not been unfolded by those who stop short of this point. But while we allot its proper field to the one fact, we must not allow it to interfere with another fact.* While we stand up for the free exercise of the will as an independent faculty, we maintain at the same time that it has laws according to which it is regulated. For proof of this, we can refer—

First, To man's intuitive principles, which declare that the law of cause and effect reigns in the will, and in regard to the responsible acts of man, as it does in every other department of the mind, and indeed in every other department of God's works. It is, we hold with all philosophers who have deeply studied this subject, a fundamental principle of our very constitution which leads us, upon the occurrence of any given event, to say it has a cause. This principle leads us, upon the occurrence of a phenomenon, to look out for something producing it, whether the phenomenon be material or mental. In regard, for instance, to any one thought or feeling, we affirm that it must have had a cause in some property of the mind, or in some antecedent state of the mind, or in the two combined. It is by an intuition of our nature that we believe that this thought or feeling could not have been produced without a cause, and that this same cause will again and for ever produce the same effects. And this intuitive principle leads us to expect the reign of causation, not only among the thoughts and feelings generally, but among the wishes and volitions of the soul. When the mind is cherishing a desire, or resolving upon a given action, here is a phenomenon of which we do believe, and must believe, that it has a cause. In this respect, wishes, desires, and volitions, are no exception to the absolute rule, which holds true of all other phenomena, spiritual and material. "This principle," says M. Cousin, "is real, certain, incontestable. And what, then, are its characters? In the first place, it is universal. I ask if there be a savage, a child, an old man—a man in health, or a man under disease—or even an idiot, provided he be not altogether so—who, upon having presented to him a phenomenon which commences to exist, does not on the instant suppose that there is a cause? * * * But more, not only do we so judge in all cases naturally, and by the instinctive power of our understanding, but try to judge otherwise—try, upon a phenomenon being presented, to suppose that it has no cause—you find that you cannot; the principle is not only universal, it is necessary."* Here, then, is wish, adoption, volition, as a phenomenon: we hold, according to the above principle, that we are naturally, intuitively, and necessarily, led to suppose that this phenomenon has a cause.

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* It is in treating of this second fact that Jonathan Edwards is impregnable. We doubt much, however, whether he has given the first fact its due place. He seems to represent desire as a mere emotion, and volition as the prevailing desire. He has denied to the will a self-determining power, and seems to represent all given volitions as caused by antecedents without the will, and to be found either in the other departments of the mind, or in external nature. It can be shown that the older divines, even those of the school of Augustine and Calvin, including Calvin himself and John Owen, regarded the will as a separate department of the human mind, obeying laws of its own, and maintained that it had an essential freedom and power of determination. John Calvin says in writing against Pighius, "If force be opposed to freedom, I acknowledge, and will always affirm, that there is a free will, a will determining itself, and proclaim every man who thinks otherwise, a heretic. Let the will be called free in this sense, that is, because it is not constrained or impelled irresistibly from without, but determines itself by itself." See Henry's Life of Calvin, Translated by Stebbing, vol. i. p. 497. Owen says, in his Dissertation on Divine Justice, ch. i. sect. 26, "For to act freely is the very nature of the will; it must *necessarily* act *freely*." The older divines stood up for the sovereignty of God, but never sought to deny the essential liberty of the will. Without losing this essential freedom, they maintained that fallen man's will has become enslaved in consequence of sin—a doctrine overlooked by not a few divines of the school of Edwards.

The author now quoted, indeed, tells us elsewhere, "Above my will, there is no cause to be sought; the principle of causality expires before the cause in the will; the will causes, it is not itself caused."† But we hold that every particular act of the will, as a phenomenon, commencing to exist, must have a cause. If it be said, that the cause lies in the human will itself, we go back to that human will, and insist that it too, as a phenomenon, must have a cause of its operation, and the mode of it. It is by an intuition of our nature, that we are constrained on the occurrence of a phenomenon to believe in the existence of a cause. But we are not led by any such principle to deny that the phenomena of the will have a cause.

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* 2d Ser., vol. iii. pp. 154, 155.

† 1st Ser., vol. i. p. 342.

When, secondly, we resort to observation founded upon consciousness, this view is confirmed. We anticipate the voluntary actions of mankind as we anticipate their judgments. No doubt we are at times mistaken in the one case as in the other in our anticipations, but we do not in these cases conclude that the voluntary actions of mankind have had no cause, any more than we infer that their judgments have had no cause—we conclude merely, that we did not know the cause, and that if we had known the full cause, we could have certainly anticipated the result. There are statistics of the voluntary actions of mankind—as of crimes, for instance—which are as accurate as the laws of mortality. We say of a man who habitually commits mean and dishonourable actions, that his conduct proceeds from a mean and dishonourable mind; and unless some change take place, (of which there must be a cause,) we expect him to act in the same way in time to come. Or should this individual, at some particular time, do an honourable action, we still seek for some principle of honour remaining in the midst of his habitual meanness, and by which we would account for the apparent anomaly. In short, we rise from effects to causes; and from causes we anticipate effects, in regard to the will as in regard to everything else. Nor do we find our expectations disappointed. Mankind find the mind that is thoroughly honourable always acting a thoroughly honourable part. And this is the ground of the confidence which we put in our fellow-creatures. Were the will utterly capricious, as some suppose, then we could put no confidence in a fellow-man; nay, with reverence be it spoken, we could put no confidence in God himself. Mankind do, in fact, trust in a person known to be of thorough integrity, that he will always be upright. So far as we have fears that any given individual may commit a dishonest action, it is because we are not sure whether he is possessed of complete integrity. So far as we are deceived with any individual in whom we confided, it is not because his character has not brought forth its proper fruits, but because we were deceived in the estimate which we formed of it. In short, human observation expects and finds, that the law of causality reigns among the wishes of the heart and the purposes of the mind, as it reigns in every other department of the soul.

By far the most formidable objection to all this is that which is thought to be found in the consciousness, an appeal to which is made with great force by Cousin, by Sir W. Hamilton, and by Tappan in his treatises on the will. It is affirmed by these authors, that we are led by consciousness to observe, that our volitions have no cause. We meet this assertion with a direct negation. We have endeavoured to unfold the full revelation of consciousness, but we maintain that it does not, that it cannot carry us the length of discovering that volitions have no cause. This is a subject on which consciousness considered in itself says nothing, and can say nothing. It may testify in regard to the existence or non-existence of such or such a mental state, but it can say nothing directly as to its being or its not being necessarily connected with some other phenomenon, and that possibly lying out of the field of consciousness. In order to discover whether there be such a connexion we must resort to other processes, when we find that the intuitions revealed by consciousness, as well as the observations founded on consciousness, lead us to believe that the will itself, with its special actings, like every other phenomenon, must have a cause.

But while there are laws of the will, we are not to regard them as laying any restraint upon it. This would be a complete misunderstanding of their nature. They no more lay restraints upon the will, than the fundamental laws of reason and conscience trammel these faculties in the discovery of what is true and what is virtuous. A truthful mind may be incapable of sanctioning falsehood, and an honourable mind may be incapable of designing a mean action ; but this is not because of any stern necessity controlling the will, but because of the very nature of the will itself. A person of an opposite spirit may be quite as incapable of conceiving of a generous action, and this not because of any restraint laid upon the will, but because of the inward depravity of the will. These laws, which are just the rules of the action of the will, the rules which it adopts, do in no way interfere with the freedom of the will; they leave it as free as it is possible for it to be, in any intelligible sense of the term.

In prosecuting such inquiries as these, we find ourselves in view of two truths, which can be established on separate and independent evidence, and which must always be taken along with us in treating of intelligent creatures as under government. The one is, that man is a free agent and morally responsible to his Governor; and the other is, that he is physically dependent on his Creator. Each of these truths stands on its separate basis. The one can be established by consciousness and conscience; and the other by reason and observation. Man, on the one hand, is conscious that he has a power of will and self-agency; and his conscience announces, as we shall show in the succeeding sections, that he is responsible. On the other hand, we are led by a fundamental law of belief to expect the law of cause and effect to reign in mind as it reigns in matter; and we actually find the operation of such a law in the exercise of the will. Each truth is thus supported by its independent evidence; and it is therefore impossible that the two can be inconsistent. It is only through a confusion of ideas, through confounding the physical and the moral, that superficial thinkers are inclined to look upon them as contradictory.*

If any man asserts that, in order to responsibility, the will must be free—that is, free from external restraint, free to make its choice, as well as free to act as it pleases—we at once and heartily agree with him; we maintain, that in this sense the will is free, as free as it is possible for any man to conceive it to be. But if, not contented with this admission, he insist that, in order to responsibility, the acts of the will, and the will itself, must be absolutely uncaused, we immediately ask him for the evidence of this affirmative proposition. If in referring to the conscience of man as that which declares his accountability, he assert that it intimates that man cannot be responsible when his volitions have a cause, then we at once meet his assertion with a direct contradiction. The conscience declares man to be responsible to God; but we fearlessly affirm, that it attaches no such qualification as that now referred to as the condition.

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* The principle of contradiction is, that the same attribute cannot be affirmed and denied at the same time of the same subject. We are not violating it, when we assert that man has free will, and yet that causation is found among his voluntary acts. In order to prove that we are violating it, it would be necessary to shew that freedom and non-causation are the same attribute. This is the very point in dispute, and cannot be settled by the principle of contradiction itself, nor indeed by any mere analytic or logical principle, but by synthetic evidence which cannot possibly be had. This remark admits of an application to a vast host of other objections brought against the doctrines of religion, natural and revealed. The rationalists have been fond of asserting that there are contradictions in these doctrines to one another, or to established truths, but have seldom enunciated the principle of contradiction, or attempted to apply it in a rigid form. In philosophy, too, it has been far too readily admitted, since Kant propounded his Antinomies of Pure Reason, that the dogmas of reason may contradict each other. We are certain that the contradiction lies not in the principles of reason, but in certain *a priori* representations of them. This is to be corrected by a cautious induction of them conducted in the Baconian method.

We can produce the separate proofs of the two separate truths advocated by us; and when looked at apart, these proofs are acknowledged to be irrefragable. Should it be demanded of us that we reconcile them, we answer that we are not bound to offer a positive reconciliation.* We point to the two objects; but we are not obliged to show what is the link, or so much as to show that there is a bond connecting them. Is it required of us in any other department of philosophy to point out the vinculum uniting two truths, established on independent evidence, before the mind gives its assent to them? We do not require the physical investigator to point out the connexion between mechanical and chemical combinations before we believe in their existence; we only require him to furnish the separate evidence of the existence of each. Or, to take another illustration. By means of the senses, we arrive at a knowledge of the existence of sounds, colours, and other external objects: and we are certain, from our consciousness, that we are possessed of intellectual ideas; no reasonable mind demands more than the separate evidence of each; no man requires some mysterious link binding them together to be pointed out, in order to believe in both. Now, we are not required to act on a different principle, in order to a rational belief, both in the moral responsibility and physical dependence of man. But does some one declare them to be contradictory? We ask him for his proof. He can throw the *onus probandi* upon us, in reference to the two truths advanced by us, and we are ready to furnish him with abundant proofs. But if he bring in a third proposition, to the effect that our two propositions are contradictory, we now throw the *onus probandi* upon him; and his proof will turn out to be nothing but his proposition re-asserted, or a logomachy in which general phrases are used to which no distinct meaning can be attached, or used in one sense to establish conclusions which can be legitimately drawn from them only when used in a totally different sense.

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* All Libertarians who admit that the prescience of God reaches to the voluntary actions of his creatures, (and none but Socinians deny this,) are landed in the very same difficulties, that is, they hold truths which they cannot reconcile. For if voluntary acts have been foreseen, they must, or, at least, shall certainly happen, and there is no effectual way of shewing how man's deeds are certain beforehand, while yet he may do as he pleases. In order to avoid the difficulty, it has been alleged, that God may be regarded as freed from the contemplation of events under the relation of time, and that the future may be seen by him as present. But this implies that we set aside that fundamental law of belief which constrains us to believe in the succession of time as an objective reality, and that the future is not present, and consequently, implies that God has given us intuitions which deceive us; in short, lands us in the subjectivity of Kant and the idealism of Fichte with all their consequences. All who draw back from this issue, must be prepared to admit, that there is no means of finding a positive reconciliation between the prescience and the implied certainty of the event on the one hand, and the power of choice left to the creature on the other. This may be the proper place for remarking that the Word of God asserts on the one hand, the sovereignty and foreknowledge of God, and on the other hand the free agency of man, but proffers no reconciliation. Divines may—in most cases should—take up the same position, and decline entering upon the philosophical questions of causation and necessity.

Such general considerations as these should satisfy the mind, that both truths may be established, though no man could point out the bond connecting them; or though there should be no link beyond the general relation of all things to one another in the Divine mind and purpose. Far as the eye can reach, these two truths are seen running parallel to each other. Possibly there may be no point in which they coincide, but there is certainly no point in which they come in collision till they terminate in the supreme Source of all power and all good.*

But let us plunge a little into the thicket, so far at least as to discover that nothing is to be gained by penetrating farther. If the mind can be brought to philosophical humility in no other way, let it be by its being driven on that wall, of which Mackintosh says, that "the wall of adamant which bounds human inquiry has scarcely ever been discovered by any adventurer, until he has been roused by the shock which drove him back."*

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* The power of will, and the universal reign of causation, we hold to be ultimate facts attested by primary principles in our constitution. Necessarians have commonly denied the one, and Libertarians the other, as reaching at least to the will. We maintain both, because we have evidence for each. As being ultimate facts, we apprehend there can be no connexion discovered between them by us. If there could be a connexion discovered, this would show that they were not ultimate facts, but that they met in a farther unity. While it is vain, as we suspect, to seek for a connexion, it is assuredly vain to seek for a contradiction; and it is wrong to represent the one doctrine as setting aside the other.

Let us, with the view of gaining a more favourable place for inspecting this subject, convey ourselves in imagination into the position of the Divine Being when resolving to create substances different from himself. Such questions as these would require (humanly speaking) to be solved: Is God to form only such creatures as have no will independent of his will? Are all creatures to be material or simply sentient and instinctive, but without reason and separate moral agency? It is conceivable that in some worlds, or in our own world at an earlier stage in its history, all creation is or was of this lower grade. But such a world, it is evident, could not manifest the higher attributes of the Divine character. Is there to be no other development of the character of God? Could not God create a being in his own image, in this respect among others, that he had freedom of will in the best sense of the term, as implying responsibility? No one can demonstrate that God could not create such a being. Such a creature, while retaining his holy character, would be a nobler manifestation of the Divine glory than mere material or even intellectual existence. In creating such a being, God would reflect some of his highest perfections; and we can conceive him rejoicing over the act, and declaring it to be very good; and all intelligent creation rejoicing with him over the formation of every new order of free moral agents.

"How would it now look to you," says the philosophic Saxon king, Alfred, "if there were any very powerful king, and he had no freemen in all his kingdom, but that all were slaves? Then said I, It would not be thought by me right nor reasonable if men in a servile condition only should attend upon him. Then, quoth he, it would be more unnatural if God, in all his kingdom, had no free creature under his power. Therefore, he made two rational creatures, free angels and men, and gave them the great gift of freedom. Hence they could do evil as well as good, whichever they would. He gave this very free gift, and a very fixed law, to every man unto this end."

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* Prel. Dis., sect. ii.

We rejoice to recognise such a being in man. We trust that we are cherishing no presumptuous feeling when we believe him to be free, as his Maker is free. We believe him, morally speaking, to be as independent of external control as his Creator must ever be, as that Creator was when, in a past eternity, there was no external existence to control him.

But the advocate of philosophical necessity interposes, and tells us that every effect has a cause, and that every disposition and volition of the intelligent creature must have an antecedent producing it. We at once agree with him. We are led by an intuition of our nature to a belief in the invariable connexion between cause and effect; and we see numerous proofs of this law of cause and effect reigning in the human mind as it does in the external world, and reigning in the will as it does in every other department of the mind. But in believing the whole mental world to be thus regulated, we are not seeking to lower or degrade it. So far from the law of cause and effect being a restraint on the freedom of intelligent beings, we cannot conceive of a free and intelligent agent except under the operation of such a law. We may, indeed, by an exercise of the imagination, try to picture to ourselves a being in whose mental operations there is no such law, whose thoughts and volitions follow each other at random; but we cannot conceive of that being as intelligent or responsible; we are constrained to conceive of him as utterly helpless, and in a more lamentable condition than the raving maniac.

If it be alleged that the circumstance, that volitions have a cause, renders the agent no longer responsible for them, we forthwith demand the proof. If it be replied, that the conscience says so, then we meet the assertion with a direct negation. The conscience clearly announces the responsibility of intelligent and voluntary agents, but it attaches no such condition to accountability. No doubt it says, that if actions do not proceed from the will, but from something else, from mere physical or external restraint, then the agent is not answerable for them. But if the deeds proceed from the will, then it at once attaches a responsibility. Place before the mind a murder committed by a party through pure physical compulsion brought to bear on the arm that inflicted the blow, and the conscience says, Here no guilt is attachable. But let this same murder be done with the thorough consent of the will, the conscience stops not to inquire whether this consent has been caused or no; on the contrary, it instantly declares the action to be highly criminal. Should it be proven that this act of the will has proceeded from an utterly malignant state of the will going before, so far from withdrawing its former sentence, the moral avenger pronounces a farther condemnation upon the prior exhibition now brought under its notice. The admiration which the moral faculty leads us to entertain of any of the holy acts of God's will is not lessened but increased, when we learn that they proceed from a will essentially holy; and the reason is, because now we admire, not merely the single acts brought under our notice, but all the other exhibitions of that holy will that rise before our mind. Nor, when we descend from heaven to earth, and from God to man, do we find the conscience excusing any given criminal action of the human family, when it is discovered that it proceeds from a heart utterly depraved. On the contrary, we find the conscience now going forth upon this farther fact brought under its notice, and pronouncing a heavier condemnation upon it than even upon the other.

In holding by these great truths, we would cut a clear way through this perplexing subject, and thus cast off on either side difficulties which it would require a volume to discuss in detail. Our limits admit of our considering only one objection—that derived from the law of cause and effect, being in the human mind a divinely appointed law.

The discovery of this very obvious circumstance has led hasty and superficial thinkers to draw very erroneous conclusions. They feel as if they were driven to one or other of two horns of the dilemma;—to suppose, with Lord Kames, that man cannot properly be responsible; or, when conscience opposes this manifest heresy against our nature, to draw back, and maintain that the law of cause and effect has, and can have, no place in the human mind. We take neither alternative. We are shut up by observation, and the primary laws of our intellectual being, to believe that the law of causality prevails among the voluntary acts of mankind, as it does everywhere else; but we deny that this law interferes with our moral responsibility; and if the law itself does not free us from moral obligations, it is clear that the circumstance that God hath appointed it cannot be regarded as interfering with our accountability. Suppose that this law had not been appointed by God—suppose that man had been a self-existent underived being like God, the existence of such a law could not have prevented us from becoming moral agents; and every one must see, that if the mere law itself could not do this, the Divine connexion with the law can have no such effect.

But this circumstance is fitted to show that the creature may be dependent, and yet free. He is rendered dependent by a divinely appointed law; but that law, so far as it touches on moral agency, differs in no way from the same law in a self-existent mind. We thus see ourselves to be at once under physical and moral law, to be equally under the Divine government, physically and morally. We are under the one through our physical nature, through the divinely appointed law of cause and effect, and we are under the other through our moral and responsible nature.

He who would deny the former of these truths must be prepared to hold that the human mind is not under the influence of law of any kind, and that all attempts to classify its powers, or calculate, at least, upon its voluntary operations, must be utterly vain; and that we cannot from the past anticipate what any man's conduct may be in time to come. This man sets himself against both the intuitions and the observations of the understanding. He who denies the latter of these truths sets himself against the clearest enunciations of the conscience. Some would charge us with believing contradictory propositions, in holding by both; but we could with greater justice charge that man with contradicting one or other of two fundamental principles of our nature, who would deny either. We are not at liberty to take our choice between them; for, in rejecting the one or other, we are rejecting an essential part of our very nature. We therefore cleave to both as truths which meet in our own as they meet in the Divine mind.

But a difficulty is pressed upon us—Is not God to blame for the creature's guilt, through his connexion with this law? Now, in reference to this difficulty, we remark, first, that though God was to blame, we should not therefore be freed from responsibility. When one man leads another into sin, the sin of the latter being committed willingly, he cannot free himself from the guilt. Even on the supposition that the creature could make his Creator share his guilt, he should not therefore be free from blame on falling into sin. The supposition now made is revolting to every well-constituted mind; but it may serve a good purpose to put it, as it shows how, even if the sinner could throw blame on his Maker, he would not thereby be freed from guilt himself. In answer to the question, we remark, secondly, that as this law does not interfere with the liberty of the agent, so God's connexion with it cannot involve him in the sin, as long as that agent is left in possession of his essential liberty. If it can be demonstrated on other grounds, as all admit, that God utterly abhors that which is morally evil, the mere circumstance that he hath so constituted man that his mind is regulated by cause and effect, cannot implicate him in man's guilt, as long as he hath left him free to follow his own will.

But it is time that we were escaping from these thorny brakes. It was with considerable reluctance that we entered upon the subject of the causal connexion of Deity with the moral actions of his intelligent and responsible creatures. Still, as the topic came in our way, it might have seemed cowardice to flee from it; and it was needful, besides, to consider it, in order to rectify the false notions that lie on either side. We tremble equally at the idea of removing the creature from under the control of God, and of making him so dependent as to involve God in the responsibility of his acts.

"When reason," says Jouffroy, "fails of success, it may master the difficulty which has veiled the subject, by separating, with care in the question, that which is known from that which is not known; by determining, with precision, the nature of this difficulty, and the circumstances, the extent, and the causes in detail; by exploring, in a word, the rock which it cannot break, and if it does not leave the problem resolved, it at least renders to science the office of correctly weighing it. These mere negative researches often conduct to a still more important result. In fathoming the nature of a difficulty which it cannot surmount, it may happen that science discovers that this difficulty is insurmountable in itself. Then it is no longer the limit of the power of the individual that is met with and ascertained —it is that of the power of human reason itself. This result is not less important than the discovery of the truth itself. There are two alternatives to the man who thinks to have his spirit calmed. The first is, to possess, or think that he possesses, the truth on the questions which interest humanity; and the second is, to know clearly that this truth is inaccessible, and to know why it is so. We never see humanity rebelling against the barriers which limit its power on all hands."* Now, it is to this issue that we have sought to bring the question of man's free and moral agency. For ourselves, we may think that we possess the truth. Should there be persons who have not arrived at so satisfying a conclusion, we are convinced that the considerations urged above, if sufficiently pondered, will at least conduct them to the alternative conclusion—that the difficulty is insurmountable. High truths, like high mountains, are apt to veil themselves in clouds. Nevertheless, it is from the summit of these lofty principles, if we could but reach it, that we see the nature and bearing of all connected truth, as from the top of some high mountain, the axis of its range, we discover the shape and size of all the adjacent hills. We may be deceived in thinking that, in these speculations, we have reached such a summit—we may only have mounted into a region of perpetual clouds. In either case, the mind should feel that it has reached a limit which it cannot pass, and, instead of seeking to rise higher, it should return to explore the vast and fruitful region within its reach.

SECT. III.—DISTINCTIONS TO BE ATTENDED TO IN ETHICAL INVESTIGATION.

In entering upon ethical inquiry, we are met at the very threshold by the important question, Is there a real distinction between virtue and vice? This is a question to which the mind sincerely inquiring after truth may find an immediate and direct answer, and this independently of all those subtle investigations into which certain other ethical inquiries conduct us. The human soul, by the very principles of its constitution, indicates that there is an indelible distinction between virtue and vice, even as there is an indelible distinction between truth and error. Every inquirer has a ready method of settling this point. Let him submit to his mind such voluntary acts as the following, and attend to the decision which it pronounces. Two persons, similarly situated, receive each a signal favour from a disinterested and self-sacrificing benefactor; the one cherishes gratitude all his life, and the other speedily forgets that he is under any obligation to the individual who has thus befriended him. When these two acts are submitted to the mind, it pronounces its decision instantly and authoritatively; and the one decision is expressed in the language, "This is right," and the other in the words, "This is wrong." Let metaphysicians dispute as they may, moralists may say, about the faculties or feelings exercised when the mind pronounces such judgments, there is no doubt that the mind does pronounce such sentences, and cannot be made to give forth any other. Should any one insist on our producing a reason for these judgments, we reckon it sufficient to reply, that they are primitive judgments declared by the mind on the case being submitted to it, and that we cannot produce a reason for the judgment which the mind utters in this case, any more than for that to which it comes, when, on contemplating first sounds, and then colours, it proclaims them to be different.

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* Morale en Mélanges.

But other questions press themselves upon us, and demand an answer; and it is of great moment that we be able to separate the questions which have become confounded together in ethical investigation. The later writers on this subject, in our country, appear to us not to have been sufficiently careful in distinguishing the things that differ, and have at times lost themselves in a labyrinth, in consequence of their not laying out in the fabric which they have built a few leading passages, into which all the others might run.

Besides the general question above referred to, there are in reality four subjects contained in the one grand subject, and the greatest confusion of idea, and in some cases positive error, have arisen from not systematically noticing the distinction between them.

There is, FIRST, the mental process, the faculty or feeling, by which the distinction between vice and virtue is observed.

There is, SECONDLY, the common quality or qualities to be found in all virtuous action.

There is, THIRDLY, the rule by which we are to determine whether an action is virtuous.

There are, FOURTHLY, the consequences which follow from virtue and vice in the feelings of the mind and the experience of society.

The elder ethical writers, whether of ancient Greece and Rome or modern Europe, treated very much of what we have called the general question, and of what we have arranged as the fourth of the specific inquiries. They have shown that there is an indelible distinction between right and wrong, and their most eloquent passages are those in which they have pointed out the consequences which usually follow the good and the evil. Their grand aim was to establish both of these truths, and, having done so, they thought they had secured a deep foundation for morality. No doubt some of them resolved the one into the other—the Epicureans resolving all virtue into a refined love of happiness, and the Stoics speaking slightingly of happiness except in its relation to virtue. Still all the higher order of moralists sought to establish both truths. Some have maintained that we should be on our guard against looking to anything but the personal charms of virtue; and others, afraid that these might not be sufficient to fix our regards, have been fond of magnifying her patrimony; but all agree that she is to be sought after for what she is in herself, or for what she brings with her.

The other questions are also of great moment, and an answer is demanded to them by the precision expected in modern investigation.

The FIRST, or the determination of the moral faculty, must no doubt be of a psychological as well as an ethical character; but it is only, as we shall shew forthwith, by an inquiry into the facts of our moral nature, that we can hope to ascertain its principles.

It is of the utmost moment, as we shall see in the sequel, that the SECOND QUESTION, as to the qualities which must meet in virtuous action, should be kept distinct from the first, or the inquiry into the nature of the mental process, which recognises these qualities. The virtue of an agent does not consist in the possession of the moral faculty or feeling, but in the possession of the qualities at which it looks, and of which it approves. We cannot be too frequently reminded that the possession of conscience and the possession of virtue are two different things. Conscience is the faculty, or feeling, which, on contemplating the voluntary acts of responsible beings, proclaims them to be virtuous or vicious; whereas virtue is the quality or the qualities in these acts which call forth the approbation of the conscience. There are points started by this second question, the ultimate resolution of which seems to lie beyond human capacity, but it is possible, we think, to specify the qualities which must meet in virtuous action on the part of man.

The THIRD inquiry, or into the rule, is eminently the practical one. It falls to be alluded to in this treatise, merely that we may distinguish it from the others, and conversely point out its relation to them. The answer to the question will be found in the many practical treatises on the duty of man.

In regard to the FOURTH question, or the inquiry into the consequences that follow virtue and vice, it is of importance to separate it from all the others. It is indeed of vast moment to be able to distinguish between the qualities which, being in an action, render it virtuous, and the qualities of the effects that flow from it. The former of these is a property of the agent, but the latter is a property, not so much of the agent, as of the Divine government.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTE (F.)—METHOD OF INQUIRY IN ETHICAL SCIENCE.

It may be proper to explain here once for all, that we profess to carry on the investigation of these topics in the spirit and after the manner of Lord Bacon. It is certain that this father of modern science meant his method to apply to the mental as well as the material sciences.—(Nov. Org., lib. i., Aph. 127.) In the one branch as in the other, there should be an orderly observation of facts, accompanied by analysis, or, as Bacon expresses, the "necessary exclusions" of things indifferent, and this followed up by a process of generalization in which we seize on the points of agreement. The only essential difference between the two lies in this, that in the one we take the senses, and in the other consciousness, as our informant. We know of no other way of constructing a scientific ethics than by commencing at least with an inductive investigation of the facts, with the view of determining the necessary laws of man's moral nature.

True it is, that in ethical inquiry we have finally to do, not with *quid est,* but with *quid oportet;* but how are we to determine the *quid oportet* but by a previous and careful examination of the *quid est.* At the very opening of such an investigation, a thousand false views present themselves, and how are they to be dispelled but by an appeal to facts attested by consciousness? The theories as to the nature of virtue differ widely from each other, and how are they to be tested but by an inquiry into the nature of man? The nature of moral principle is to be ascertained—if it can be ascertained—by an investigation of man's moral constitution.

It is all true, as will be urged in opposition to this inductive method of inquiry, that there are moral principles in man's nature prior to all experience. And this fact should, we acknowledge, keep us from appealing to experience, to authorize principles, which are rather fitted and intended to sanction experience. But this does not at all settle the question as to how we may come to know what these principles are, so as to be entitled to use them in ethical science. It is quite true that they act spontaneously prior to and apart from any observation of their exercise, but we are not at liberty to make a reflex use of them till we have carefully determined their nature as a matter of fact. They operate *a priori* and independent of experience, but *a posteriori* investigation of our experience is necessary in order to the detection of their law or rule.

Virtue or moral good is not natively known by the mind as an abstract or general idea. Nor is the ethical principle, which we acknowledge to be in our constitution, before the consciousness as a principle. In the natural progress of knowledge, physical and moral, the mind begins with the individual and the concrete, and by these it reaches the general and the abstract. Just as no man ever yet saw a law of nature—all that we see are individual facts falling out according to law, so no man can be conscious of ethical principle—all that he discovers by the internal sense is a particular decision of the moral power. We arrive at a knowledge of a law of nature by the generalization of the facts presented to the senses, and we can attain an acquaintance with ethical principle only by an induction of the facts revealed by consciousness. He who would use natural law in the construction of physical science, must be prepared to enunciate its nature ; and the same condition should be imposed on ethical investigation —he who employs moral law for scientific ends must be ready to shew what is its place in our moral constitution. Not only so, but in scientific investigation it is required that we categorically declare the precise rule of the law employed. If we proceed to rear a system on an imperfectly inducted or an imperfectly represented law, we may find ourselves landed in ever increasing errors as we advance. The astronomer, for example, would be involved in ever multiplying blunders, provided he represented the law of gravitation as varying inversely according to the distance, instead of the square of the distance. But moralists are landed in far more serious mistakes when they set out with a wrong or even a mutilated view of ethical principle. For example, errors with far-reaching consequences spring up, when it is affirmed that moral good is merely a far-sighted self-love, or a refined love of happiness, or that it has its foundation merely in the sentiments of the percipient mind, for we cannot, under such systems, speak of righteousness as an essential perfection of God. But mental laws when thus inductively determined may be regarded as primary principles, sanctioned by the very structure of the mind in which they are placed, nay, as authorized by the God of truth who hath planted them there, and may be subjected to intellectual analysis, and used deductively in all ethical investigations. We may now construct an ethical philosophy made up of *a priori* principles, but these ascertained by *a posteriori* induction.

Ethics is the science of the necessary laws of our moral nature, just as logic is the science of the necessary laws of our thinking nature. In both, the laws are in themselves *a priori* and independent of experience, but in both they can be ascertained only by *a posteriori* induction. We have indicated the grounds which render it necessary that we should proceed in this manner ;—first, there are no *a priori* ideas before the mind as abstract or general ideas ; and secondly, there are no *a priori* principles before the consciousness as principles. Hence it is, that while native principles of thought and morality operate *spontaneously*, we are not entitled to make a *reflex* or scientific use of them till we have enunciated their nature and rule in a precise formula. This distinction, so obvious when stated, is lost sight of altogether in those *a priori* speculations which are flooding us from every quarter. Because there are *a priori*, or, as we should prefer calling them, constitutional principles in the mind, persons seem to imagine that they can also find out their nature *a priori*, and proceed to employ them in system-building. On such grounds as these we reject in ethics, not *a priori* principles, but the *a priori* method of discovering them.

The historical method of inquiry has been recommended by some, as by Schleiermacher, with whom ethics is an investigation of human nature, with its forms and tendencies developing itself in history. We admit that history supplies to ethics some of its most valuable facts and illustrations; but as human action is always presented in history as a complex web, in which good and evil are mixed together, it is needful to have a test to determine which is the one and which the other. We are thus brought back to the inductive investigation of man's moral constitution as the only method of constructing a scientific ethics.

We are speaking throughout of the science of ethics. For the purposes of practical morality, it is not needful to determine the nature of ethical principles; for these principles operate spontaneously, and act best when we are not thinking of them but are simply desiring to do what is right. So far as we need practical rules, these may best be learned from the Word of God and treatises founded upon it. But the Scriptures, their aim being practical, do not give us ethical any more than physical or metaphysical science. Doubtless the holy and heavenly morality there unfolded, and, above all, the perfect exemplar of the character of Jesus, are useful—nay, I believe, necessary means of enabling us to rise to a perfect idea of the morally good. The Bible doctrines of the atonement and of grace are needed to help ethical inquiry out of the difficulty which originates in the existence of sin—a fact very much ignored by secular moralists. Still there is a scientific basis furnished to ethics in the laws of our moral constitution. So far as it is founded on real facts, such a science cannot possibly lead to error, while it will be found to supply not a few valuable contributions to the Christian evidences. An inductive inquiry into man's moral nature proves that it is faithfully described in God's Word, and that there is a beautiful adaptation in the Gospel remedy to the wants of humanity.

SECT. IV.—INQUIRY INTO THE NATURE OF CONSCIENCE, OR THE MENTAL FACULTY OR FEELING WHICH RECOGNISES AND REVEALS THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN RIGHT AND WRONG.

We now take up the first of the four special topics which fall to be discussed in treating of God's moral government, or, in other words, we go on to inquire what is the mental state or process by which the distinction between good and evil is discovered and manifested?

Let us begin with taking a passing survey of the mode of the operation of the human mind when different classes of objects are presented before it. Let us first view it as acting when a proposition of a purely intellectual character is submitted to it—any of the propositions, for instance, of geometry.

On any one of these propositions being brought under its notice, it pronounces a decision regarding it, and the language in which we express the decision is, "It is true," or, "It is false." Now, in pronouncing this decision, the mind proceeds on its own laws or principles—principles which are fundamental, and as incapable of analysis as the simple elements to which chemistry at last conducts us in the analysis of corporeal substances.

It is a favourite doctrine of Aristotle, the great analyst of the reasoning process, that everything cannot be demonstrated, and that the beginning of demonstration must be intuition.* All reasoning carries us back to certain first principles. In saying so, we mean that in the analysis of it we are conducted at last to truths which admit of no demonstration. Properly speaking, reasoning does not carry us back to these axiomatic truths—it proceeds upon them. These principles have at no time a separate existence as notions in the mind, at least until it begin to form reflex metaphysical abstractions. The conception of them is one of the most refined and difficult exercises in which the mind can engage, and the correct expression of them one of the most arduous works about which human language can be employed. The reason proceeds on these axiomatic principles, just as the eye sees by means of rays of light; and neither takes cognizance of the media needful for its exercise. It is by a reflex act of the mind, and that a very subtle one, that the philosopher is led to discover what is the nature of the fundamental principles imposed upon, or rather forming part of, the very faculties of the human mind. They are roots or radicals supporting all visible truth, but themselves unseen, and only to be discovered by artificially digging into the depths which they penetrate, and which cover them from the view.

All modern philosophers of authority have acknowledged that there are such fundamental principles. Locke denied them in theory, but confessed their existence in fact under the name of intuitions. Kant expounds them as the categories of the understanding, and the ideas of pure reason. Reid calls them the "principles of the *communis sensus*," very unhappily translated by a name usually differently applied—common sense. Stewart denominates them the "laws of human thought or belief." Brown speaks of them as the primary universal intuitions of direct belief. Cousin talks of them as simple mental apperceptions and primitive judgments. Mackintosh, in referring to them, says—"They seem to be accurately described as notions which cannot be conceived separately, but without which nothing can be conceived. They are not only necessary to reasoning and belief, but to thought itself." Mackintosh elsewhere represents them as "the indispensable conditions of thought itself." It is to them, as we apprehend, that Whewell refers under the phrase "fundamental ideas," so often employed by him. Sir William Hamilton has completed all past metaphysics on this subject, by showing that the argument, from the principles of common sense, is one strictly philosophic and scientific, and by a critical review of the nomenclature, all proceeding on the same principle, which has been employed by upwards of one hundred of the profoundest thinkers in ancient and modern times.* It is very interesting to observe how deep and earnest thinkers come at last to a wonderful agreement, even when they appear, to superficial observers, to have no one principle in common.

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* See Post. Anal., B. i. ch. iii., &c.

There are such principles pre-supposed, where the mind is employed intellectually, as when we argue, an effect must have a cause. There are also such fundamental laws implied in the exercise of the mind when contemplating the voluntary acts of responsible agents. When these pass in review before the mind, it declares regarding them, that "they are good," or that "they are bad," and it does so according to a principle which cannot be resolved into anything simpler than itself.

There is a very general agreement in the present day, as to the marks by which intuitive principles may be distinguished: they are necessity and universality. Moral principle can stand both these tests when they are properly understood. The mind is constrained to believe that there is a distinction between justice and injustice, between right and wrong. It is not that moral principle is necessarily obeyed, for it is ever neglected in practice, and constantly disobeyed—still it is there in the bosom, asserting its claims and ready to condemn transgression. All men possess conscience, just as all men possess reason. Though there are persons in whom the former, like the latter, may be very much in a state of dormancy, or confined within very narrow limits, and engaged about comparatively trivial objects; still both are there and capable of being excited and cultivated. It is not that moral principle is universally submitted to, for, in fact, it is universally rejected, but still it is in all men—when it serves no other end—as a law to condemn them, so that "they are without excuse."

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* See Note A. appended to Hamilton's edition of Reid's Works.

Should any party insist on our resolving this intuitive principle, we remind him, that in doing so we could only be reducing it to a farther principle, and that he might, on the same ground, ask us to resolve that law also, and, as he thus pushed us, we must at length be carried back to a principle which could not be reduced to anything simpler, and which we must therefore just assume. Now, we assert at once, that it is by an original principle that the mind decides, when voluntary acts pass under its notice, that they are right, or that they are wrong. It seems evident to us, on the one hand, that it cannot be resolved into any of those intellectual axioms on which the understanding proceeds in acquiring knowledge. Compound and decompound these as we please, they never will lead to the idea of right and wrong. Nor, on the other hand, can it be reduced to those principles which are connected with the desire of pleasure, or the aversion to pain. No composition of such ideas or feelings could produce the idea or feeling expressed in the words "ought," "duty," "moral obligation," "desert," "guilt." As well, in our view, might we talk of a combination of gases, or of any other corporeal substance, producing an idea, as of mere intellectual ideas, or mere emotions connected with the sensations of pleasure and pain, producing a sense of moral obligation. Even as no composition of colours can produce sound, and no composition of odours produce colours, so, as it appears to us, no possible combination of intellectual conceptions, or sensations of pleasure and pain, or of the desires connected with these, can produce moral approbation and disapprobation.

We are thus brought to the conclusion, that the mind declares that there is an indelible distinction between good and evil ; just as it declares that there is an indelible distinction between truth and error. We believe that the mind, in the one case as in the other, proceeds on its own fundamental principles. Does some one insist on our making this moral idea patent to the intellect, and justifying it to the understanding ? We reply, that the distinction does not come under the cognizance of the understanding, any more than the difference of sounds can be brought under the discernment of the eye, or the difference of colours under that of the ear. Should the objector become proud and presumptuous, and insist on our yielding to his demand, we ask him to begin with demonstrating the axiomatic principles on which reason proceeds; and when he has done so, he may be the better prepared to try his skill upon an analysis of ethical law, or rather, after having made the attempt and failed, he will the more readily acknowledge that there may be moral principles, the existence of which reason may discover, but cannot possibly explain.

Call them by what name you please, you come back in all inquiry after truth to principles which reason cannot demonstrate, but on which, on the contrary, all reasoning proceeds. To deny this is to involve ourselves in the absurdity of an infinite series of proofs, each hanging on the other, with nothing to support them or on which to rest, or in a circle of proof in which there is connexion, but no origin or foundation, and no progress. In like manner, in the inquiry into virtue and vice, we come back to ultimate principles, on which all morality rests. Just as the former class of principles are anterior in the order of things to all exercise of the reasoning faculties, so the latter are anterior to every given exercise of the conscience.

To justify any given proposition to the reason, we have only to show how it is built on the fundamental principles of reason. This being done, reason makes no farther inquiry—it is now completely satisfied. The scepticism which insists on something farther is not sanctioned by reason, but rather requires to set itself against reason, and reason in all its acts condemns it. In like manner, the mind is satisfied when you have shown that an action is reconcilable with the fundamental principles of morality. When this is done, it asks no more questions. If farther inquiries are made, it does not beat responsive to them—indeed, it cannot so much as comprehend them.

While the intellect and its fundamental principles, and the conscience with its fundamental principles, are in many respects analogous to, yet they are at the same time independent of, one another. The understanding does not feel that it is called to justify itself to the conscience, nor is the conscience required to justify itself to the understanding. Each has its own assigned province, in which it is sovereign and supreme. A thousand errors have arisen from imagining that the conscience should give account of itself to the understanding, and that the understanding should give account of itself to the conscience. Each has its own sphere, and cannot in that sphere interfere with or clash with the other. While independent in themselves, they must, however, as residing in the same mind, and frequently judging of different qualities of the same concrete object, have multiplied points of affinity.

The conscience may be profitably viewed under three aspects:—

FIRST, AS PROCEEDING UPON AND REVEALING A LAW WITH AUTHORITATIVE OBLIGATIONS. Every intuitive principle in our constitution has its special truth to reveal and sanction, and this is to be ascertained by a careful induction of its individual exercises. What then does the moral power in man say, when we accurately interpret its dicta? This seems to be its peculiarity, that it declares what ought and what ought not to be. This is its very nature and function, to point to, and announce a law demanding obedience. In this respect it is a faculty *sui generis*, different from every other principle of the mind. It is not a law merely in the sense in which the fundamental principles at the basis of the intellectual powers are laws, but in a peculiar sense applicable to nothing else. Its office is to declare not what is, but what ought to be. Its mood is not the indicative, like the reason, nor the conditional, like the understanding, nor the optative, like the will, but the imperative. Other powers approve of truth, but this of virtue; others guard us from error, but this from crime. It sits on a throne like a king, its rules are obligations, its affirmations are statutes, its proclamations are enactments. It sits in judgment as a judicature, and its decisions are commands, its sentences are condemnations, its smiles are rewards, and its frowns are reproofs. It asserts not power, but claims, which affirm their superiority to power. It sets forth not might but right, which in its nature is above might. It often says of what is, that it should not be, and of what is not, that it should be. It frequently lends its countenance to what is most despised among mankind, and pronounces a sentence of disapproval on that which is most highly esteemed. It is not afraid to attack power in high places, while it will espouse and defend the cause of the persecuted and the helpless.

It rests on its own prerogatives, and it wears the crown and wields the sceptre, whether its claims are acknowledged or denied.

Many of the ancients delighted to contemplate the moral power under this aspect, as, for example, Cicero, in the well known passage,—" Right reason is itself a law congenial to the feelings of nature, diffused among all men, uniform, eternal, calling us imperiously to our duty, and peremptorily prohibiting every violation of it." " Nor does it speak one language at Rome and another at Athens, varying from place to place, or from time to time; but it addresses itself to all nations, and to all ages, deriving its authority from the common Sovereign of the universe, and carrying home its sanctions to every breast by the inevitable punishment which it inflicts on transgressors." It is under this same view that it is presented to us by a still higher authority. " They who have no law, (no written law,) are a law unto themselves, which show the law written in their hearts." It is under the same aspect that it is presented by the profound German metaphysician Kant, when he calls it the categorical imperative, whose absolute rule is, Act according to a maxim which would admit of being regarded as a general law for all acting beings. So far as the mind listens to this inward monitor, it declares that virtue never can be vice, nor vice virtue; that there cannot be a state of things in which deceit is good and justice evil. The distinction between right and wrong is not a mere personal conviction; we feel that it holds good not only for ourselves, but for others, for all intelligent and moral beings.

Not only is this principle in the mind, but it has, as Butler has shown, an authoritative place there. " Thus that principle by which we survey, and either approve or disapprove of our own heart, temper, and actions, is not only to be considered as what in its turn is to have some influence, which may be said of every passion of the lowest appetite, but as from its very nature manifestly claiming superiority over all others, insomuch that you cannot form a notion of this faculty, conscience, without taking in judgment, direction, superintendency. This is a constituent part of the idea, that is, of the faculty itself; and to preside and govern, from the very economy and constitution of man, belongs to it. Had it strength as it has right, had it power as it has authority, it would absolutely govern the world."* He adds, "This faculty was placed within, to be our proper governor, to direct and regulate all under principles, passions, and motives of action. This is its right and office. Thus sacred is its authority." It is the highest judicatory in the mind of man, admitting of appeal from all, and admitting of appeal from itself to no other human tribunal. Reviewing the exercise of all the other faculties and affections of the mind, it is subject only to the immutable law to which it looks, and to God, whose righteous character is embodied and represented in that law.

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* **Human Nature, Sermon ii.**

For though supreme within the mind, the conscience does not look upon itself as absolutely supreme. While it is the conscience which informs us what moral principle is, it is not the conscience which constitutes moral principle. In this respect it resembles the senses and the intellect, and hence may be called the moral sense and the moral reason. The senses do not create the objects which they perceive, nor does the intellect create the truths which it apprehends; and just as little does the moral faculty in man create the law to which it looks, and which it makes known to him. The sun exists in these heavens, whether there be an eye to look to it or not: two parallel lines could never meet, even though there should never be a mind to contemplate their relation; and moral law would be imperative, whether the conscience did or did not acknowledge the obligation. This is what conscience reveals of itself; this is implied in all its decisions, when rightly interpreted. It declares that the distinction between good and evil does not proceed from the caprice, but is written on the very constitution of the mind; and farther, that it does not spring from the structure of the individual mind, but must exist for all beings possessed of intelligence and free will. It points to a law prior to itself, above itself, independent of itself, universal, unchangeable, and eternal.

The conscience is not the law itself, it is merely the organ which makes it known to us—the eye that looks to it.* Alas, that eye may become diseased, and fail to take the proper view of the law. Under the influence of a rebellious will, it may become corrupted, equally with the understanding, or the emotions, or any other part of our nature. When thus failing to perform its proper functions, no attempt should be made to set it aside, to nullify or destroy it, any more than the reason should be dismissed because it is liable to error, but pains should be taken to quicken, to elevate, to restore it. That it may become deranged, through the influence of a corrupted will, that it may be restored to pristine purity, through the atonement provided for transgression, and the grace of God,—these are topics which will fall to be discussed as we proceed. Meanwhile, we call attention to the fact, that the conscience looks to a law above it, as the sun is above the eye to which its light comes.

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* This is a view to some extent overlooked by Butler, and by some otherwise elevated ethical writers, who look at the moral power from a psychological standpoint. We frankly confess, that though it was before us, it was not so with sufficient steadiness, in the earlier editions of this work.

Not only so, but the mind is led to connect this law with God as lawgiver. In the opening of this treatise we have said, that the idea of God is pressed on the mind from a variety of quarters. The order and adaptation of nature suggest a designing mind. The law-revealer in the breast also proclaims a lawgiver. Some go so far as to maintain that all this is implied in the very nature of the law—that a law without a lawgiver would be null, would be meaningless. This sense of responsibility, they say, implies a being to whom we must give an account; this sentiment of fear tells of one who may punish. Of this we are firmly convinced, that when we are led to believe in the existence of a living God, on the abundant evidence supplied on all hands, we are also led to trace the moral law up to him. As soon as we admit that man is a created being, and that there is a God who made him, the conscience points to him as sanctioning and appointing the moral law. We cannot conceive of a faculty distinguishing between good and evil, planted in our constitutions by one himself devoid of integrity. We must believe that God approves of the justice and benevolence which the moral power would lead us to commend, and disapproves of the sin which it prompts us to condemn. Tracing up the law to him, we are led to look on him as its Giver, its Guardian, and its Executor. That law is seen to represent his moral nature, with which it may be identified. In obeying it, we feel that we are pleasing him; in disobeying it, we feel that we are giving him offence.

SECONDLY, CONSCIENCE MAY BE CONSIDERED AS PRONOUNCING AN AUTHORITATIVE JUDGMENT UPON ACTIONS PRESENTED TO IT. This is an aspect not inconsistent with that under which we have just been contemplating it. This moral law has an exponent in the mind to act as an arbiter and judge, and pronounce decisions on the cases submitted to it. In this respect—that is, so far as it judges and decides—it is analogous to the intellect or reason.

Some later ethical and metaphysical writers, we are aware, have maintained that there is no judgment passed by the mind on moral qualities being presented to it. The whole mental process is represented as being one of the emotions, and not ot the judgment or reason. And it is at once to be acknowledged, that if we define the reason or understanding as the power which distinguishes between the true and the false, or which discovers relations, as of the resemblances and differences of objects, we must place morality altogether beyond its jurisdiction. Perceptions of this kind are in their whole nature different from the perceptions of the difference between right and wrong—between duty and sin. But if it be meant to affirm, that when the voluntary acts of responsible beings pass in review before the mind, it does not pronounce a judgment or decision, then we cannot but hold the view to be inconsistent with our consciousness, and as far from being well fitted to furnish a foundation to a proper ethical theory. Just as the mind, on certain purely intellectual propositions being presented to it, says, "This is true," or "This is false;" so we find it, on the voluntary actions of intelligent beings being presented to it, declaring, "This is right," or "This is wrong."

The parties who are most inclined to remove morality from the region of the understanding, such as Brown and Mackintosh, are often constrained to speak of the moral faculty, and to talk of its decisions and judgments. The very language which they use, in speaking of the emotions which are supposed by them to constitute the whole mental process—the emotions, as they call them, of moral *approbation and disapprobation*—seems to imply that there must be a judgment of the mind. If approbation and disapprobation are not judgments, we know not what can constitute a judgment of the mind. "We cannot," says Butler, "form a notion of this faculty, without taking in judgment."* Nor is it possible to find language expressive of the mental phenomena which does not imply that, along with the emotion, there is a judgment come to and a decision pronounced; and it would be confounding the different departments of the human mind altogether to refer such a judgment to our emotional nature, or mere sensibility.

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* Human Nature, Sermon ii.

We apprehend a mathematical proposition, and we declare it to be true; here there is acknowledged on all hands to be a judgment. We apprehend next instant a cruel, ungenerous action; and we declare it to be wrong. Now, in the one case, as in the other, there is a judgment of the mind. It is true, that in the two cases, the judgments are pronounced according to very different principles or laws—so very different as to justify us in speaking of the conscience as different from the reason. It is quite conceivable that the mind might possess reason, and distinguish between the true and the false, and yet be incapable of distinguishing between virtue and vice. We are entitled, therefore, to maintain, that the drawing of moral distinctions is not comprehended in the simple exercise of the reason. The conscience, in short, is a different faculty of the mind from the mere understanding. We must hold it to be simple and unresolvable, till we fall in with a successful decomposition of it into its elements. In the absence of any such decomposition, we hold that there are no simpler elements in the human mind which will yield us the ideas of the morally good and evil, of moral obligation and guilt, of merit and demerit. Compound and decompound all other ideas as you please—associate them together as you may—they will never give us the ideas referred to, so peculiar and full of meaning, without a faculty implanted in the mind for this very purpose.*

This faculty has to do with a particular class of objects, in regard to which it judges and pronounces a decision. "There is a principle of reflection," says Butler, "in men, by which they distinguish between, approve and disapprove of, their own actions. We are plainly constituted such sort of creatures as to reflect on our own nature. The mind can take a view of what passes within itself, its propensions, aversions, passions, affections, as respecting such objects, and in such degrees, and of the several actions consequent thereupon. In this survey, it approves of one, disapproves of another, and towards a third is affected in neither of these ways, but is quite indifferent. This principle in man, by which he approves or disapproves of his heart, temper, and actions, is conscience—for this is the strict sense of the word, though sometimes it is used so as to take in more."* This greatest of all ethical writers tells us farther—"There is a superior principle of reflection or conscience in every man, which distinguishes between the internal principles of his heart, as well as his external actions, which passes judgment upon himself, and upon them pronounces determinately some actions to be in themselves just, right, good, others to be in themselves evil, wrong, unjust, which, without being consulted, without being advised with, magisterially exerts itself, and disapproves or condemns him, the doer of them, accordingly, and which, if not forcibly stopped, naturally and always, of course, goes on to anticipate a higher and more effectual sentence which shall hereafter second and affirm its own."†

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* Sir James Mackintosh (in the Preliminary Dissertation to the Encyclopædia Britannica) thinks that the phenomena of conscience can be accounted for by the association of ideas. We meet this theory with the important principle, overlooked by not a few in reference to other matters on which it bears, that association of ideas is the mere law of the succession of ideas, and cannot give a new idea, without a separate faculty for the purpose. Had Mackintosh fully unfolded his theory, we suspect that it would at once have been seen, that we must have a principle to account for the idea itself, as well as to account for the way in which it is connected with other ideas.

THIRDLY, CONSCIENCE MAY BE CONSIDERED AS POSSESSING A CLASS OF EMOTIONS, OR AS A SENTIMENT. We have endeavoured, indeed, to show that it is not a mere emotion, or class of emotions. But while it is something more than a "class of feelings"—it is so described by Mackintosh—it does most assuredly contain and imply feelings. The mind is as conscious of the emotions as it is of the judgment.

In opposition to those who insist that there is nothing but emotion, it might be urged in a general way, that emotions never exist independently of certain conceptions or ideas. Let a man stop himself at the time when emotion is the highest, when passion is the strongest, and he will find, as the substratum of the whole, a mental apprehension or representation of an object. There is an idea acting as the basis of every feeling, and so far determining the feeling; and the feeling rises or falls according as the conception takes in more or less of that which raises the emotions. The ideas which raise emotions have been called (by Alison in his Essay on Taste) "ideas of emotions."

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* Human Nature, Sermon i.

† Human Nature, Sermon ii. An analysis of the decisions of the conscience will be found in sec. i. of the next chapter of this treatise.

The conception of certain objects is no way fitted to raise emotions. The conception, for instance, of an angle, of a stone, or of a house, will not excite any emotions whatever. Other conceptions do as certainly raise emotions, as the conception of an object as about to communicate pleasure or pain. Such feelings arise, whether we contemplate this pleasure or pain as about to visit ourselves or others.

Emotion rises not only on the contemplation of pleasure and pain to ourselves or others—it rises also on the contemplation of virtue and vice. When the conscience declares an action presented to the mind to be good or bad, certain emotions instantly present themselves. Man is so constituted that the contemplation of virtuous and vicious action—declared so to be by the conscience—like the contemplation of pleasure and pain, awakens the sensibility.

While thus the conception determines the emotions—does not constitute them, however—it is not to be forgotten that emotions have a most powerful influence upon the current of the thoughts and ideas. The emotions may be compared to fluids which press equally in all directions, and need, therefore, a vessel to contain them, or a channel in which to flow; but, like these fluids, they yield the strongest of all pressure, and serve most important purposes in the economy of life.

Upon these general grounds, then, we would be inclined to assert, that there must be the decision of a faculty before there can be a feeling in regard to moral actions. "At the same time," says Cousin, "that we do such and such an act, it raises in our mind a judgment *which declares its character*, and it is on the back of this judgment that our sensibility is moved. The sentiment is not this primitive and immediate judgment, but is its powerful echo. So far from being the foundation of the idea of the good, it supposes it."* On the other hand, we acknowledge that the existence of the feeling has a most powerful reflex influence in quickening the faculty. It breathes life into, and lends wings to what would otherwise be inert and inanimate. But we must quit these general grounds. The connexion between the emotions and their relative conceptions has not received that attention which it deserves from mental analysts. It is a topic lying open to the first voyager who may have sufficient courage and skill to explore, without making shipwreck of himself, the capes and bays by which this land and water indent into each other.

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* Du Bien. Œuvres, vol. ii. p. 267.

The moral faculty, then, can never be employed without emotion. It is the master power of the human soul, and it is befitting that it should never move without a retinue of attendants. These feelings, which are its necessary train or accompaniment in all its exercises, impart to it all their liveliness and fervour. They communicate to the soul that noble elevation which it feels on the contemplation of benevolence, of devotedness in a good cause, and patriotism and piety under all their forms. These attendants of this monarch faculty, while they gladden and manifest its presence when the will is obedient to its master, are at the same time ready to become the avenging spirits which follow up the commission of crime with more fearful lashings than the serpent-covered furies were ever supposed to have inflicted. The conscience travels like a court of justice, with a certain air of dignity, and with its attendant ministers to execute its decisions. All this is as it should be. If it is desirable, as we have seen, that morality should be presented under the character of a law, and that it should have its appropriate faculty, it is equally needful that it should have its train of feelings, to give a practical interest and impetus to all the authoritative decisions which this judge pronounces. "The design of the sentiment," it is finely remarked by Cousin, "is to render sensible to the soul the connexion of virtue and happiness."*

It is always to be borne in mind, however, that the simple possession of conscience, with its accompanying emotions, does not render any individual virtuous. We are made virtuous, not by the possession of the faculty which judges of virtuous action, or of the emotions which echo its decisions, but by the possession of the virtuous actions themselves. This may seem an obvious truth when stated; but it has been strangely overlooked by many, who conclude that man is virtuous because he is possessed of such a power, and of its responsive feelings. These persons do not reflect that the faculty and its accompanying sentiment are ready to condemn the possessor of them, when he is without the affections and actions in which virtue truly consists. We believe that there is no responsible agent so fallen and corrupted, that he does not possess this conscience and these feelings: both, it may be, are sadly perverted in their exercise—yet still he possesses them in their essential form, and that by the appointment of God, in order that they may so far punish him, and enable him to measure the depth of his degradation.

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* Du Bien. Œuvres, vol. ii. p. 314.

The poet, the tragedian, and the novelist, address themselves to these moral emotions, and seek to call them forth by the description or exhibition of scenes in which tempted chastity stands, suffering virtue is triumphant, and patriotism burns with a flame all the brighter, because of the surrounding darkness and apostasy; or, changing the scene, they would rouse indignation, terror, and pity, by the pictures of powerful villany and deceit spreading misery among the innocent and the helpless. It is not to our present purpose to inquire whether such representations do really strengthen the moral faculty, and refine its sensibility; or whether they do not rather, by their vain shows, carry us into an imaginary world, from which we return with less ability and inclination faithfully to perform our part in the actual world. We call attention to these phenomena for two purposes; one is to show that there are such feelings, which can be operated on; and the other, to guard against the idea, that the possession of them constitutes any individual a virtuous agent. Thousands have wept in the theatre over the trials of suffering chastity, and have gone out to commit deeds of impurity, and thereby to increase the temptations to licentiousness, and multiply the sufferings of those outcasts who yield to them. The novel has been stained by many a tear, flowing from eyes which never wept over the real miseries of the poor. Sterne causing us to weep over the dead ass, and meanwhile treating his own mother with unkindness, is only one of a thousand instances recorded in the history of man to demonstrate that the feelings which arise on the presentation of good or evil actions all belong to a different department of the human mind from the virtuous affections themselves. On account of not observing this distinction, multitudes have thought themselves good because they have a capacity of admiring the good. It is the grand error of not a few of the most powerful writers in the present day to suppose that hero-worship and heroism are allied to each other; that he who admires the hero has himself a kindred spirit. From the same cause, philosophers and ethical writers have drawn far too flattering a picture of human character, and leave upon us the impression, that, because mankind possess feelings of complacency on the contemplation of virtue, they are therefore possessed of virtue itself.

The view now offered of conscience, from the way in which we have been obliged to state it, may seem a very complex one. In reality, it is very simple. It is to be regretted that, in giving a description of any mental state, we are constrained to use language which sounds so abstract and metaphysical. The conscience is the mind looking to a moral law, and pronouncing judgments giving rise to emotions. We do not see how anything could be simpler.

The writer who is generally acknowledged to have written in the most masterly way on the conscience, seems to have viewed it at times at least, in all the lights in which we have now presented it. He calls it again and again a "principle," and a "law," the "principle of reflection and conscience," and the "law of his creation," a "determinate rule," "the guide of life, and that by which men are a law unto themselves;" and affirms, that "every man may find within himself the rule of right, and obligations to follow it." That he regarded the conscience as partaking both of the nature of a faculty and a feeling, is evident from his calling it a "faculty in the heart," and more particularly from the following passage:—"It is manifest, that great part of common language, and of common behaviour over the world, is formed on the supposition of such a moral faculty, whether called conscience, moral reason, moral sense, or Divine reason, whether considered as a *sentiment of the understanding, or a perception of the heart, or, which seems the truth, as including both.*"

We have a complete view of the conscience only when we look at it under this threefold aspect, in this its triune nature. In each of these characters it serves a separate purpose. As looking to law, it gives to morality a clearly defined, a solid and consistent shape, and an authoritative power. When duty is presented merely as emotion, we have an impression that it might change with changing circumstances or with man's changing feelings, and might be tempted with Rousseau, to recommend as right, whatever recommended itself to our sentiments. But when it knows that there is a law, the mind feels that it has to do with strict precepts and solemn sanctions. Nor is it to be forgotten, that this law with obligations reveals authoritatively the will of God. Again, as a faculty, the conscience is an arbiter ever ready to decide, a master ever ready to issue commands. As a sentiment, it furnishes pleasure, stirs up desire, and leads to activity. Nor is it unworthy of being remarked, that it is in its very nature connected both with the understanding and the feelings, partaking of the strength and stability of the one, and of the life and facility of the other. It is the "faculty of the heart," and the "sentiment of the understanding." While thus linking itself with all parts of our nature, it speaks as one having authority to every other power and principle of the human mind. Were this "faculty of the heart" allowed its proper power, it would, in the name of the supreme Governor, preserve for him—that is, for God—the place which he ought to have in every human head and heart.

SECT. V.—QUALITIES WHICH MUST MEET IN MORALLY RIGHT ACTION ON THE PART OF MAN.

The inquiry into the nature of the morally good is different from the inquiry into the nature of conscience, though the two have often been confounded.

The question here started is, in what does virtue consist, what is its essence or the common quality found in all virtuous action? We have never fallen in with a satisfactory answer to this question in all its generality. We suspect that a definition of virtue taken absolutely is beyond the faculties of man. Price and Stewart represent moral good as an original and simple quality seen at once and intuitively by the mind, incapable of being reduced into anything more elementary, and therefore incapable of definition. We suspect that this is the correct representation, *so far as human intelligence is concerned.* We make this qualification, because we do not mean to decide whether higher intelligences might not be able to fix on some quality or qualities as constituting the essence of the good. But of this we are sure, that all attempted definitions of virtue on the part of ethical writers, have either been utterly defective, or have consisted simply in the substitution of synonymous phrases. When it is said that virtue is agreement with the eternal fitness of things, or that it is benevolence, or utility, or beneficial tendency, all such definitions are erroneous. When it is said that virtue is that which is good, right, meritorious, obligatory, all such explanations amount to this, that virtue is virtue.

Man must content himself, we suspect—at least we mean in this treatise to satisfy ourselves—with answering a much lower question,—lower in speculation, though vastly superior in practical importance. What qualities must be found in all truly good actions on the part of man?

Whatever these qualities be, they must be in the virtuous agent. What is a virtuous agent, but an agent acting virtuously; it is a virtuous state of the mind. This proposition, frequently overlooked, needs only to be announced to command universal assent.

By keeping this principle steadily before us, we shall be saved from a number of erroneous theories. It will at once shew that it is wrong to represent virtue, with Hume, as consisting in the useful and agreeable; or as the advocates of this theory, somewhat modified, now place it, in beneficial tendency, or the greatest happiness principle. If the supporters of this ethical system had so stated it, as to represent the intent to produce utility, or the purpose to do a beneficial act, as constituting virtuous action, their views would not have been inconsistent with the proposition now laid down. But they are careful to inform us, that the parties who perform the virtuous act may not be aware, or distinctly conscious, of its tendency. Love to God, they tell us, is beneficial; but they acknowledge that the person who loves God is not led to do so by a perception of the benefit to be derived. The utility or beneficial tendency of actions may be observed, they say, by careful reflection, but is not necessarily before the mind of the agent. They farther allow, in regard to the great mass of mankind, that they are not in circumstances to determine the ultimate tendency of actions; that if they waited till they knew precisely all the effects of their conduct, they would never act; and that, if they acted on their own narrow short-sighted views of utility, they might perform the most atrocious crimes in the name of virtue. The advocates of the theory are constrained, in order to obviate these difficulties, to acknowledge, that though utility or beneficial tendency may be the proper effect of every virtuous action, yet that it has not necessarily a place in the intention of the actor. It cannot, then, constitute the distinguishing quality of virtue. It is not so much an attribute of virtue, as an effect following from it, through the Divine appointment and arrangement; and an effect following, because of the honour which God would put upon virtue.

What quality, then, in the mind of the agent may be regarded as constituting moral good? Butler does not answer this question. There are passages in his Treatise on the Nature of Virtue, which show that the subject had been before him; that he knew the question of the nature of virtue to be different from the question of the nature of conscience; but that he did not think it necessary to prosecute the former inquiry. He speaks of himself, as not "stopping to inquire how far, and in what sense, virtue is resolvable into benevolence, and vice into the want of it."

Hutcheson has given a distinct answer to the question, and defended his theory with his usual acuteness; he represents virtue as consisting in benevolence. But so far as by benevolence he means merely an instinctive attachment springing up independently of the will, we maintain that his theory is erroneous; for in such affection there cannot be anything either virtuous or vicious. Again, if by benevolence is meant simply goodwill to a neighbour, or a desire to promote his happiness, the scheme is all too narrow; for it excludes the love of God, and the holy affections connected with it and springing from it. Nor does it seem possible, without an unreasonable straining and perversion, to include one of the most essential of all the virtues, that of justice, under benevolence understood in any legitimate acceptation.

There are, at least, two essential mental elements in all morally right action; there is the will, and there is righteousness; there is the will obeying the law addressed to the moral faculty. It is voluntary action, done because it is right. Not only so, there is a third element, arising from the relation in which the law and man stand to God.

First element.—We regard the will as the seat of all virtue and vice. There is an act of the will wherever there is choice, preference, or resolution—wherever the will has adopted or sanctioned any particular mental state—wherever there is wish, desire, or volition; and wherever there is none of these, *there* we hold there can be no moral action. There is nothing either moral or immoral in a mere intellectual act, or in a mere sensation, or a mere emotion, considered in themselves, but whenever the will chooses these, gives its consent to them—*there* virtue or vice may exist.

Certain acts of the will, we are aware, are neither virtuous nor vicious. To prefer pleasure to pain, honour to disgrace, society to solitude; in such acts as these, whether they exist in the shape of wish, desire, or volition, there is nothing morally approvable, or the opposite. The morality in the will begins at the place at which conscience interposes. If it says, this pleasure is sinful—this honour can be attained only by unlawful means—this society is full of peril to the best interests of the soul; and if the pleasure, honour, and society are still preferred, the party is guilty of sin.

We are happy to find our views on this subject coinciding in the main with those of Dr. Chalmers. "We would now affirm," says he, "the all-important principle, that nothing is moral or immoral which is not voluntary. We have often been struck with writers upon moral science, in that, even though professing a view or an argument altogether elementary, they seldom come formally or ostensibly forth with this principle." "We think it for the advantage of our own subject that it should receive a different treatment; that it should be announced, and with somewhat of the pomp and circumstances, too, of a first principle, and have the distinction given to it, not of a tacit, but of a proclaimed axiom in moral science." He speaks of this principle as that "which binds together, as it were, the moral and the voluntary."* It is an old theological maxim, *omne peccatum est voluntarium.* Doubtless some eminent divines denied it, but they did so, by narrowing the meaning of voluntary, and confining it to acts done deliberately or with premeditation.

We maintain, then, that there can be neither virtue nor vice where there is no exercise of the will. There is nothing, for example, meritorious in the mere exercise of the intellectual faculties. Except in the motives by which he was swayed, Newton had no more merit in discovering the law of gravitation, or inventing the fluxionary calculus, than the machine has in following the impulse given it; nor is there anything morally approvable in the mere operation of the instinctive feelings and affections, such as the love of pleasure, the love of offspring, and the common likings and attachments which exist in the world. These may be in the highest degree becoming, just as proportion, as order, and beauty are becoming; but in themselves they are neither virtuous nor vicious. In order that they may become virtuous, they must, somehow or other, be placed under the dominion of the will. They are vicious only so far as they are allowed by the will to flow out contrary to the dictates of that law which God hath prescribed for the regulation of the conduct.

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* Chalmers's Mor. Phil., chap. v

On the other hand, there may be virtue or vice wherever there is the consent of the will. But while we are inclined so to limit the seat of responsibility as to bring it within the will, yet we would so extend it, as to make it wide as the will, in all its exercises. Accordingly, we cannot agree with those who, as Cousin and Jouffroy, think that no state of the mind is sinful but a positive volition. If we know that the object is forbidden, and still wish it, desire it, and are prevented only by certain prudential considerations from determining upon the acquisition of it, the act is undoubtedly sinful. No doubt, if we are restrained, not by mere prudence, but by a hatred of sin, from seeking the attainment of the object, in this case the wish, the desire, is not sinful; but then, observe what is the precise nature of the wish: it is a wish to obtain, not the object with all its sinful concomitants, but the pleasure, honour, or society, as separated from the object. Now, in such a wish or desire there is nothing improper; nay, there would be nothing sinful in a positive volition which embraced no more. But if, after knowing the object to be forbidden, or that we cannot obtain it without its necessarily attendant sin, we still continue to long for it, then the very concupiscence is criminal, as the will is giving its consent to its continuance. "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."*

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* It is at this point that we differ from Dr. Chalmers. Following too implicitly Dr. Brown, whose lectures had just been published at the time when the former was called on to write his Course of Moral Philosophy, he has confounded the will in some of its exercises with mere sensibility. Not that he has allowed his penetrat-

Regarding all virtue and vice as lying within the territory of the will, that is, of the mind exercised voluntarily or optatively, we maintain, at the same time, that their territory is wide as that of the will, and that all states into which will enters, or to which it has given consent, are capable of being morally praiseworthy or blameworthy. Not that the will in every possible state is necessarily either virtuous or vicious; for it may be set on an indifferent object, and neither be the one nor the other in some of its exercises. What we mean is, that under all its modifications, and in particular wherever it exists as wish, desire, or volition, it may be virtuous if properly directed, and sinful if improperly exercised. Let us now look at some of the ac-

ing eye to be completely dazzled by the brilliant coruscations of the ingenious speculator referred to. A lingering attachment to Dr. Thomas Reid, at a time when he was decried in Scotland, and a high sense of moral principle, as distinguished from mere emotion, have saved him from adopting all the views of the singularly subtle analyst whom he so much admired. In particular, we find him distinguishing volition from mere desire, which latter he represents as emotion, with nothing in it either virtuous or the opposite. Dr. Brown has altogether confounded the will and the emotions, and, so far as we can see, has virtually blotted the former out of his map of the mind altogether, at least as a separate territory. Chalmers has hurried in to snatch volition, or the final resolution to act, from the list of mere emotions, and to place it by itself as a separate mental operation. We are inclined to think that he should have gone further, and taken from the mere emotions, not only positive volition, but wish and desire, and placed the whole in a separate department of the human mind, the region of the will, which is the seat of responsibility. We were long sadly puzzled with this whole subject, especially in its bearings upon ethics. We put the question, are mere emotions morally approvable or the opposite, and we had to answer that they are not. What actions then, we asked, are moral or immoral in their nature, and we were taught to reply, acts of the will. But may not wishes, desires, and affections be holy or unholy? Here we paused for a time. On the one hand, we were inclined to think that affections and desires might be virtuous or vicious. Were not the desires of the Psalmist holy, when he said, My soul thirsteth for God? Then our Saviour has said, "Whosoever looketh on a woman," &c. But on the other hand, wishes and desires according to the received doctrine are mere emotions, and can in themselves possess no moral quality. We continued for a time in this painful state of perplexity. We felt relieved beyond measure when the thought occurred, that wishes and desires, and affections into which wish and desire enter, are not emotions, but exercises of a higher power. Following out this view we were constrained to shift the boundary line between feeling and will, from the place at which it has been commonly laid down, but we found that in doing so we were drawing the essential distinction both in a psychological and ethical point of view. It seems to us to settle the old theological controversy about the sinfulness of concupiscence, —the concupiscence of evil is sinful whenever the will has given its consent to its rise or continuance.

knowledged virtues, and inquire if they do not lie in this region of the soul.

It is universally admitted that love or benevolence must ever be placed among the highest of the virtues; nay, some have maintained that it constitutes virtue. But in ranking it among the virtues, it is necessary to draw a distinction. Dr. Brown says, very properly, that "the analysis of love presents us with two elements—a vivid delight in the contemplation of the object of affection, and a desire of good to that object."* Now, we do regard it as of great importance to distinguish these two elements. The one may exist, and often does exist, without the other. There is often, on the one hand, the delight in the object, the selfish delight, without the desire of good; and there may, in virtuous minds, be the desire of good to persons in whom no special delight is felt. The two, though often associated, proceed from essentially different departments of the human mind. The first is merely emotional, and, except in so far as it is used or abused by the voluntary powers, there is nothing in it virtuous or the reverse. But when there is a desire of good, a simple, disinterested desire of good, there is a more active and positive state of mind; we have mounted to the region of a higher faculty, and may find virtue, and virtue of the highest order. But there can, we maintain, be virtue in love or benevolence, only so far as it rises above mere instinctive attachment and emotional delight, and contains a positive energy of the will.

But the field of possible virtue and vice is wide as the domain of the will. Virtue may consist of other mental affections besides mere benevolence.

One of its most essential forms is justice, or a wish, a determination to do what is right, and give to all their due. *Justitia est constans et perpetua* VOLUNTAS *jus suum cuique tribuendi*, is the definition adopted by Justinian in the opening sentence of his Institutes. This virtue certainly comes within the department of the will, but cannot, with any propriety, be classed under benevolence.

Virtue is in one of its highest forms, or rather in its highest form, when the will is properly exercised in reference to the Divine Being. It is something higher than mere benevolence, when thus directed towards so elevated an object. We feel that

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* Lect. 59.

God does not need our good wishes, as he does not need our help; and yet we feel that there is a holy exercise of the will due on our part to him. Hence arises the desire to glorify God, being the highest desire which the creature can cherish, and the noblest motive by which he can be actuated. This internal exercise of the will finds its fullest and most appropriate embodiment and expression in praise and prayer. Under this feeling we say, "Hallowed be thy name," and earnestly long that God, as he is all-glorious, may be glorified as he ought. We say, "Thy will be done," and feel it to be the highest work in which we can engage to do his will, and labour that others also may know it, and do it.

Taking this theory with us, we see how there may be virtue, not only in *well-wishing*, but in the opposite of well-wishing; how there may be virtuousness in the voluntary aversion to sin, being the converse of the voluntary love to what is good. There may be high moral excellence implied in resisting vain thoughts rising spontaneously, and sense presenting temptations. In all holy minds, as an essential part of holiness, there is an intense desire that sin may not exist, and that, when it exists, it may not prosper, but be driven into perpetual darkness.*

But the will is not the only element. There is a

SECOND ELEMENT.—Analyze and simplify as we may, we cannot do away with the element of a moral faculty with a rule of action, that is, a moral law. In all our decompositions we come back to this great ultimate fact, and cannot go beyond it. But let us see that we fully and fairly unfold the contents of this fact. Our moral nature reveals a law which is—first, independent of it; secondly, binding upon it; and, thirdly, binding on all intelligent beings.† The conscience declares that it has not created that law, it feels that the law has been imposed on it. It feels that it is merely the interpreter of a law binding, independently of the recognition or non-recognition of it by any individual. It declares regarding itself that its function is not to assume authority over the law: but to bow to the law as having authority over it. Tracing up this law, the mind is led to connect it with the Divine nature and character. We thus find the moral law revealed as an ultimate fact in the human mind, and we believe it to represent an ultimate fact in the Divine mind. We can follow it to its ultimate seat on the earth in the constitution of the human soul, and thence trace it up to its last seat in heaven in the very nature of God. We can follow it thus far, and it can be traced no farther.

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* Chalmers says, (Mor. Phil., v. 6, *note*,) that desire respects the objects wished, and volition the action by which the object is attained; and (v. 16) that volition alone is the proper object of moral censure or approbation. We regard desire in actively longing for the object wished, (as benevolence, for instance,) and also the voluntary hatreds, (as the hatred of sin,) as all capable of being moral or immoral, as well as the volition.

† Certain metaphysicians aim at saying something like this, by telling us that the law has an objective existence. But what is meant by objective in such an application? Does it signify an object of thought? In this sense a griffin, when we think of it, is objective. Or is it employed to signify a really existing thing, like God and angels? Then the doctrine lands us in all the absurdities of extreme realism. The phrases subjective and objective are used in so many senses, and

" For a thing to be done virtuously," says Chalmers, " it must be done voluntarily; but this is not enough, it is not all. It is an indispensable condition, but not the only condition. The other condition—that to be done virtuously, it must be done because of its virtuousness; or its virtuousness must be the prompting consideration, which led to the doing of it. It is not volition alone which makes a thing virtuous, but a volition under a sense of duty; and that only is a moral performance to which a man is urged by the sense or feeling of moral obligation. It may be done at the bidding of inclination, but without this it is not done at the bidding of principle. Without this it is not virtuous."*

It is not, then, mere well-wishing, mere benevolence, or affection, considered even as an act of the will, which constitutes virtue. The affection shown by the ancient Egyptians and modern Indians towards cats and other species of the lower animals, cannot be regarded as meritorious; nor could any extent of that affection, though it should lead to the founding of an hospital for their behoof, come up to the morally commendable. Yet we suspect that much of the benevolence that exists in the world, and which is so applauded by it, is of no

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have had such a misleading influence in modern German speculation, that they might, like the word idea, be profitably banished from philosophy, or employed only as correlative phrases, the one signifying the mind as contemplating a thing, the other the thing, real or imaginary, as contemplated. The word objective is certainly not fitted fully to develop what we mean, when we say that the law is independent of the individual mind, having authority over it, and over all minds.

* Chalmers's Mor. Phil., c. 5.

higher nature; it cannot be regarded as virtuous, because it is destitute of one essential moral quality. It is only when we are kind to the lower animals from a higher principle, and exercise benevolence towards mankind, *because this is right*, that our love becomes morally commendable.

Taking this principle along with us, we see how it is perfectly possible that there may be numerous good wishes, and fervent benevolent desires, in which there is no virtue, but rather much sin. There may be much evil in ill-regulated benevolent desires and volitions. Neither the existence nor the fervour of such desires can prove the mind in which they exist to be in a morally right condition. The most wicked of men have not been without their feelings of kindness; some of them have shown their wickedness in the nature and character of their generosity. These feelings, and the corresponding actions, can become morally commendable only when cherished or done *because they are right.*

In summing up the truth which we have gained, it appears that God, the Governor, has given to every responsible agent a transcript of his own nature, first, in a power of will, which we hold to be as free as it is possible for it to be in any intelligible sense of the term; and, secondly, and alongside of this free will, a fixed law for the guidance of the will. Freedom and law are thus the fundamental charters of this kingdom of mind. The mind is virtuous when the two are in union, when the free will is moving in accordance with the fixed law. The mind is criminal when the free will is unfaithful to her partner and husband, the law. There begin from that instant that schism, those family dissensions, if we may so speak, which do so distract the soul. And from these inward contests there can be no escape by means of a lawful divorce. That fixed law still holds forth its claims, and stands by its rights, which it will not, and cannot forego, nor even lower by a single iota. Hence that internal dissension which rages in the breasts of all whose will has rebelled against the law of their nature, that is, the law of God—a schism which, but for Divine interposition, must exist for ever, it being impossible for the distracted parties either to separate on the one hand, or cordially to unite on the other.

The morally good, then, cannot exist without the presence both of righteousness and benevolence or love. There is benevolence in every right exercise of justice. Justice is love leading us to give every one his due. There is righteousness, too, in every right exercise of love. A holy love is cherished toward a being, according as that being has claim upon it. No analysis can free us from the one or other of these essential elements. Justice without love would be a mere rule, with nothing to impel the agent to perform it. Love without justice is the mere lavishing of a weak affection. The two meet and blend in every act that is morally right, as they meet in the character of every holy creature, and in the character of the holy Creator.

All deep and earnest inquirers into the nature of virtue have got at least a partial view of the concrete truth. Each has seen it under one aspect, and has gone away so ravished with the sight, that he never thought of going round the object and inquiring if it had not another aspect equally lovely. Clarke enunciates a profound truth when he says, that there is an eternal fitness in virtue, for there is such a fitness in that righteousness which regulates benevolence. Hutcheson is right in saying, that in all virtue there is benevolence; and Edwards has given his theory a wider expansion in affirming that love to being is of the very essence of virtuous action. Kant seized on a fundamental principle, when he represented the practical reason as announcing a law imperative and universal. Reid, Stewart, and Cousin, have developed the mental process by which this eternal fitness is discovered, and they have shown, too, that virtue must reside in the will. Each has seen so much of the truth. To use an image of Jouffroy, each has seen one side of the pyramid, and has written beneath it—not, as he ought, This is one side of the pyramid, but, This is the pyramid. One party has seen the love, and another has seen the righteousness. Hutcheson observed that affection and feeling were essential parts of all virtue, but took no cognizance of the fixed principles by which they must be regulated. Edwards, in a profounder investigation, discovered that love must be according to a rule ; but failed in explaining the relation of love to law.*

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* It is not to the credit of the catholicity of the German philosophers, that they seem to be utterly ignorant of Edwards, who, in point of depth of intellect, is equal to any of themselves, and in holy purity and humility far their superior. We have at times thought that his theory of virtue, considered as an ultimate resolution of it, may be nearer the truth than any other. But he has failed, because no mortal man might succeed. Man has not data to solve the problem. He cannot

Clarke and Cudworth, with clear intellectual intuition, saw the presence of eternal and unresolvable principles. Kant exhibits the imperative in all its rigour, but fails to soften its stern aspect by the smiles of benevolence. Reid and his followers have patiently investigated the powers of the human mind by which these principles are discovered; but none of these latter philosophers seem to give its proper place to the no less important element of benevolence. The true theory is to be found, not in the indiscriminate, not in the mere mechanical combination of the two, but in their chemical combination, in the melting and fusing of them into one.

Justice and Love are each the complement of the other. Let us not separate the things that are indissolubly joined together in this holy marriage-covenant. Let Righteousness stand for ever on the pedestal on which he has been set up, with his high look and unbending mien, the master and the guardian; and ever beside him, beneath him, and leaning upon him, yet beautiful and graceful as he, let there be seen Love, with smiles upon her face and gifts in her hands. Our eye would at times rest most fondly on the latter; but then we are constrained to acknowledge, that were she left alone there would be no principle of discernment for her guidance, and so we look eagerly to justice as the ground of our lasting confidence and security.

These considerations may help us to understand the relation between love on the one hand, and righteousness on the other, the former being the impellent of virtue, and the latter the rule. The two are not antagonist, but conspiring. In the Divine character, and in all holy character, the two are in closest and loveliest union. Love, ever ready to flow out like the waters from a fountain, has unchanging justice determining its measure and direction, and furnishing it with a channel in which to flow.

measure the claims of being as being, the rule to him must be a plainer and more practical one. Edwards' theory fails in giving a proper foundation to justice, and in unloosing the knot produced by the existence of sinful beings. We may here be allowed to add, that the United States of America have of late years furnished very important contributions to ethical science. Waylands' work will continue to be reckoned a standard one even by those who do not altogether accord with his theory of virtue. Alexander on Moral Science, is one of the most satisfactory treatises which we have on man's moral agency. Hickok has given some fine expositions of ethical principle. Dr. Hodge has done more than any living man in the way of expelling the errors that have entrenched themselves in the border territory in which Divinity and Ethics meet.

Let us now contemplate the soul of the agent whose will is acting in unison with the moral law. Taking will in the enlarged sense in which we have been contemplating it, it must, from its very nature and position, exercise a powerful influence upon the intellect and the affections. As seated at the springs of mental action, it can lay restraint upon the rising evil. In a well-regulated mind, that is, a mind thoroughly guided by the moral faculty, the very intellect becomes virtuous, in a sense, in all its exercises, because ever restrained on the one hand, and quickened on the other, by a holy will. In such a mind, too, the sensibility raised by mental apprehension or conception will, like the mental apprehension and conception which raises it, be thoroughly sanctified, and become the first reward which virtue reaps. We have taken pains to show that the will is not the same with the intellect on the one hand, or the emotions on the other; but there are many mental affections in which their streams mingle and flow on together. There is high moral good in the resolute application of the intellectual powers to great and good pursuits, and assuredly deep moral evil in the wasting of high gifts of which so many men of genius have been guilty. The element of will with its attached responsibility enters into all feelings which rise beyond fleeting emotions, and become settled affections, whether benign or malign.

In love, using the term in its highest sense, the main element is the will. The will declares that this object, this person, is good, is to be preferred and chosen, and wishes well to that object or person; and these we regard as the important constituents of true affection. Take, as an example, love to God. Here, the will, in the first instance, fixes on the Divine excellence, and would choose it; and here, too, the will leads us to desire God's glory, and the furtherance of his will. Or take love to man—disinterested love to man. Here, too, the will leads us to fix on living being in general, and such a being as man in particular, as an object to be chosen by us, and to wish well to him, and endeavour to promote his happiness. It is not a mere excitement of mind, or a doting attachment to some of the race, (an attachment to all is impossible,) but a benevolence, a desire that they may be blessed, holy, with a determination to supply them, so far as may be in our power, with all that tends to this end. The affection which goes not this length deserves not the name of love—it is mere instinct, like the attachment of the dog to its master, or to its offspring, nay, it may become utterly selfish and depraved, entwining round the object to which it is attached only to injure it, clasping it only to ruin it in its embrace.

While we regard the will as the main element in love, we know, at the same time, that there are emotions so far following separate laws; but we maintain, that if the will be steadfast and consistent, it will draw the feelings after it, and come to guide them all. We are quite aware that a mere act of the conscience, saying that such and such an act ought to be done, but in no way attended to by the will, cannot produce such a result; nor will it follow from a mere decision of the judgment, that if we do such and such an act, beneficial consequences will ensue. It is of the power of the will that we are predicating that it can accomplish these important ends. Nor will a single act of the will, or a single wish or determination, in opposition to the will generally set in an opposite direction, change and direct the whole current of the feeling. The wicked man wonders that he cannot love what is good on his making a momentary resolution to do so. Truly, if a mere passing desire to be good could make a man good, there is perhaps no wicked man upon the earth who would not have been good long ere now; for, we doubt if there be any man so depraved, that he has not at times had a desire to become virtuous. But it would be wonderful if, with a will so habitually depraved, the wicked man could be so easily led to love what is good. He wills at this present time to secure the good, but next instant he deliberately prefers the evil. When the will is wavering and inconsistent, the sensibility will come to follow its own impulses, as it does in every ill-regulated mind. When the will prefers the evil, and then takes steps to paint the evil in false colours, in order to awaken the feeling, the perverted feeling will become the most unequivocal sign, and one of the most fearful punishments of a corrupted will. Should the will, on the other hand, steadily prefer the morally good, and take pains to have it ever presented to the mind in the proper light, it will speedily allure the feelings whithersoever it will, and this must always be towards that which is holy and good.

Let but this rudder of the mind be rightly used, and it will speedily guide the whole vessel—the whole soul, intellect, and emotions—in the right way, allowing them, meanwhile, to perform all their proper functions. How grand, how delicately sensitive would be a soul so regulated! It might be said of it, as Cowper said of the ocean,—

> "Vast as it is, it answers as it flows
> The breathing of the lightest air that blows."

But the view presented would be imperfect, did we not include a

THIRD ELEMENT,—The obedience rendered should have a respect to God. We are not inclined to bring in this as the primary element, it is in a sense a derivative one. It presupposes that we have been brought to believe in God, and the independent moral law is one powerful means of leading us to do so. But this law in pointing to God, points to him as the lawgiver, (*νομοθέτης*, James iv. 12.) When we view the law as appointed by God, it takes a more definite form, and wears a more imposing aspect. Not only so, but upon God being made known, the law constrains us to acknowledge that we owe supreme love and obedience to him, and this opens up a new and higher class of duties. Under both aspects it turns morality into religion, and makes all duties, even those which we owe to our fellow-men, to be also duties which we owe to God. Here the other two elements of law and love meet and become one, as they ascend to heaven in a flame of holy affection.

This is the element, and a most important one it is, dwelt upon by theologians. But divines often put it in the wrong place psychologically and logically; and represent the Divine Will and the Divine Command as the ground of virtue. Doubtless they intend thereby to benefit the cause of religion, but they are in reality doing it serious injury. The proper statement is that a deed is good, not because God wills it, but that he wills it because it is good. To reverse this order, is to unsettle, as it appears to us, the foundations of morality. We found virtue not on the simple will of God, but on his holy will, his will regulated by righteousness, an attribute as essential to him as his will. But it is nevertheless true, that the Supreme Being being acknowledged by us to be the just and holy lawgiver, our morality may henceforth go down deeper and mount up higher, and we must learn to have respect to him in all our offices. Some moralists—such as Aristotle in his Nicomachean ethics—who acknowledge the obligation of law, have overlooked this element, but in doing so, they have stopped short of the point to which their principle of law should have conducted them. Morality cannot attain its full organic growth, unless it has godliness as its vital power. The sacrifice of duty lies cold upon the altar till it is kindled by the flames of love to God.

These elements are ever united in true holiness, as the three colours are combined in the white beam. The sunbeam is divided into several rays as it reaches our atmosphere and our earth, and this is for our benefit, inasmuch as it thereby furnishes the infinitely varied hues, and tints, and shades, which do so delight the eye. The pure light of holiness is also separated into parts on our earth, but, alas, it is by the murky atmosphere of sin ; and as the issue we have those sad perversions and defects found even in the acts of man which are deemed the fairest and best. We have a kindness without godliness, a morality without religion, and a pharisaic piety without morality or love. All these are the effects of sin, which hath shattered and dissevered our moral nature. Most common of all we have a worldly morality which has no respect to God ;—why this should be the most frequent form of the disseverance we shall explain in next chapter. But assuredly all the three are combined in one simple affection in the breasts of all pure intelligences. It should be the effort of the soul of man in its regenerating struggles, to endeavour to combine what has thus been separated. This is the grand aim of the atonement provided in the Gospel, to deliver man from the curse of sin, and to set him forth with aid furnished, on the work of regaining that image which had been so marred and defaced.

"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." This would be no unpleasant or difficult work to those whose hearts were pure and filled with love to God ; but how arduous to those who have been alienated from him ? Ah ! this rejoining of the dislocated is often felt to be the most difficult of all tasks, by those who are striving after the perfect man. They would find it comparatively easy to do the work—they may have been doing it all along—but how difficult to rise to these pure and spiritual motives ! It does not consist in taking any new step, it may be, but putting a new life and motive into those we were accustomed to take before. We believe that nothing short of the "impulsive power of a new affection" will accomplish this. We shall succeed only when we do it to Him who loved us and gave himself for us. But when we are led to set such an aim before us, every office becomes exalted; the glorious end is made to sanctify every lawful means employed to further it; the meanest work is ennobled by being made part of the service which we owe to God; the poor man is raised to the same rank as the rich man, and the servant is as high as his master. Such a motive power will make us insensible to all the ordinary trials and temptations of life, just as the Roman army, when eagerly engaged in battle with the enemies of their country, were unconscious of an earthquake which made the ground to tremble beneath their feet.

But it may be proper, before leaving this subject, to add, that besides the specific question, What is a virtuous act? there is a more general question, into which the other resolves itself, What constitutes a virtuous agent? The answer is, An agent in whom the moral faculty or law has its proper place and power, ruling over all, and subordinating the will as the active principle. The human mind is a unity, and it is impossible to separate the acts, in regard to their responsibility, from the agent who performs them. It is not the act which must bear the responsibility, but the agent who does the act. God judges not so much the acts as the agent in the acts. When the actor is not in a right state—when his will is not in subjection to the law appointed to rule it—it is not possible that he can be virtuous. The conscience will not justify him, and we may conclude that the God in whose name the conscience speaks will condemn him.

These considerations lead to the conclusion that an agent in a morally right state, and no other, can perform a morally right action. It is not enough to consider the isolated act, we must consider likewise the agent in the act, before we can pronounce it to be either virtuous or vicious. We hold this principle to be one of vast moment, both in ethics and theology, and we may return to the consideration of it when we come to consider the existing moral state of man.

SECT. VI.—PRACTICAL RULE TO BE FOLLOWED IN DETERMINING WHAT IS GOOD AND EVIL.

We do not mean to enter upon the practical interests involved in the discussion of this subject. All that is required of us in such a treatise as this, is to shew how the principles unfolded stand in relation to the practical rule.

Every man, we have endeavoured to shew, is led by his conscience to see that he is under law, which is the law of the God who made him, and who made the universe. It is because man is under law, that he can, by disobeying it, become a sinner, and be made to feel that he is a sinner; for "where there is no law there is no transgression." This it is which entitles God to call men into judgment, and which renders every sinner without excuse.

To man, as shut out from supernatural revelation, the law in the heart is the arbiter; they who have no written law are a law unto themselves. But this arbiter always points to a law above itself. And there are times when, even with this monitor, the mind feels itself sadly bewildered, not being able with clearness to see the path of duty in perplexing circumstances, or to distinguish between the voice of conscience and that of interest or passion. We believe that the deepest feeling of conscience in the breasts of the heathen, if they would attend to it, and if it could find utterance, would give forth a cry for a brighter light, for a star to guide them to one whom they have been in a sense expecting. Some of the most deeply thinking of the Pagan philosophers have expressed their longings for a supernatural revelation.

The existence of the law in the heart does not render a written law unnecessary—perhaps not even to beings perfectly pure. Those who possess the inward principle will find stability and consistency imparted to morality by embodying its dictates in a code of precepts. Hence every people possessing the art of writing has had some sort of written law. But the work of forming a moral code without revelation has ever been felt to be encompassed with great difficulties,* and the result of such an effort has invariably been a very imperfect and mutilated exhibition of the moral law itself. The moral power, if attended to, will say how much it needs to have a written law from God to guide it. Taking into account the circumstance that man's conscience is perverted, we believe it to be absolutely necessary, in order to its rectification, to have a revealed law acting the same part as the dial, when it is used to set to right the disordered time-piece.

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* According to the principles enumerated in Note E, it can only be done by an inductive generalization of the individual decisions of the moral faculty. But besides that the conscience is so misled by a perverted will, how difficult is it to seize and express, in all their integrity, the principle involved in the moral judgments?

But it would be a great mistake to suppose that the written law could have efficacy without the law in the heart; on the contrary, the former pre-supposes, and is especially addressed to the latter. For how can we be made to know or feel that we are bound to obey the written law? Plainly by the law in the heart, which says, this is right. Should it be said that we are bound to render obedience, because it is the law of God, we admit that we are so; but at the same time we put the question, How do we know that we are bound to obey the will of God? and the reply must bring us to acknowledge the mental faculty. The inward principle, no doubt, points to an outward law, but the obligation of the outward law is made known to us by the inward principle.

The practical rule of obedience to those who are in possession of revelation, is the written law, as addressed to the conscience. This revealed law is summed up in love, but this love rendered in obedience to the law of God; and it will be observed that there is an agreement between this and the views which we have been giving of the essential elements of the morally good. Having such a law sanctioned by God, the conscience itself declares that we should study and obey it, as the law of God our Governor. In the law of the heart God has a means of making us feel our obligation to obey every other law, moral or positive, which he may superadd by a revelation of his will.

While virtue consists in a willing obedience to moral law, it is implied that what we obey is truly moral law. We must be at pains to inquire whether what we take to be law is really moral law, or the mere semblance of it. The greatest evils have sprung from mistakes on this subject, and from misinterpreting, under the influence of sinful bias, the law of heaven, whether in the conscience or in the Word. The law itself requires that we use all means to determine what is really the will of heaven on such and such a subject, and that we do not mistake the voice of inclination for the voice of duty, or the voice of man for the voice of God.

It is one of the most beneficent of the effects of the law ot God written in the Bible, that it rectifies the conscience, which has become deranged, and bewildered in its derangement, and so needs a hand to guide it back to its right position. It is another of its beneficent effects that, being used as an instrument for this purpose by a higher power, it restores to the conscience its primitive discernment and sensibility, when it becomes a constant monitor against evil, and a means of prompting to all excellence.

SECT. VII.—TENDENCY OF VIRTUOUS ACTION.

We have endeavoured to show that there is a holy quality in virtuous action itself, separate from its tendency or results ; and that the human mind is led, by its very nature and constitution, to commend that quality and disapprove of the opposite, independently of the consequences which may follow from the one or the other. But while the intuitions, whether of reason or conscience, are anterior to all experience and observation, the latter are continually furnishing corroboration of the reality of intuitive principles. The mind, for instance, proceeding on a certain instinct of thought, expects the same causes to be always followed by the same effects, and it finds actual nature fulfilling its anticipations. Without such a correspondence between the internal organization of the mind and the actual phenomena of the external world, man would be in a constant state of amazement and fear. There are also confirmations (in many respects similar, though in others different) of the reality and beauty of the moral law constantly supplied by the arrangements of God. It is a most delightful corroboration of the intuitive principle and feeling which is furnished by the discovery of the fact, that all virtuous exercises are immediately followed by pleasant sensations in the breast of the virtuous agent, and ultimately tend to further the best interests of society.

The phenomena, to which our attention is now called, are of a twofold character. There is the internal and there is the external correspondence. There are the pleasurable emotions that accompany the cherishing of virtuous affection; and there are also the advantages accruing to society from the performance of virtuous action. These consequences are not individual or isolated, but are rather of the nature of classes or groups.

I. There is first the pleasant sensation that pervades the mind when it is cherishing virtuous affection. In all virtuous affection there is love, and this affection in itself furnishes delight. It is a pleasure far higher and deeper than any which can be obtained from mere animal gratification. On the other hand, all sinful affections, such as envy, malice, and revenge, are painful in themselves, and a deep spring of misery, independently of any visible judgments which they may bring in their train.

Then there are, secondly, the pleasurable emotions which spring up on the contemplation of virtuous action as performed by us. This is a pleasure distinct from, and additional to, the former. There is a pleasure in the very cherishing of the virtuous affection, and there is a pleasure in the sentiment raised when the moral faculty looks at these affections. The mind is in a state of pleasurable emotion when it is virtuously employed; and the mind is also in a state of pleasurable emotion when it reviews its own virtuous affections. There are not only, for instance, the delightful sensations produced by holy love, but there are also the delightful sensations of moral approbation, which rise up on the reflex contemplation of such affection. In this respect, virtuous affection has an advantage over every other. There are many other affections of the mind that are pleasurable in themselves—such as the desire of pleasure, and the sense of beauty—but no others that have their pleasure indefinitely multiplied by emotions which rise when these affections are reflexly contemplated. In other cases, the pleasure can be prolonged only by calling up anew the affection in its positive exercise, which it may not always be possible to do. In this case, while the delightful sensation can be renewed by the renewed cherishing of the affection, a new and equally delightful feeling is called forth, by the very meditation upon the affection. The virtuous man has thus the double pleasure, somewhat resembling the twofold sensation enjoyed by those animals which first enjoy the pleasure of eating their food, and then, as they recline at ease, the pleasure of ruminating. Or to adopt an image which comes nearer the reality, (in so far as the secondary pleasure is one which can be many times repeated :) the pleasant sound which the soul utters to its God, when it is virtuously employed, can be indefinitely prolonged by reverberation from the heights of the moral faculty and the echoing responses of the moral feelings.

There is a similar multiplying of the pain which follows vicious action. All the malign affections are painful in themselves, and painful also in the recollection of them ; and they raise pain as the mind reflects upon them with abhorrence. The misery of the soul is immeasurably increased by the regurgitation of feelings as they are beat back by a reproaching conscience.

There is, thirdly, the effect of virtuous and vicious affection upon the association of ideas. This is a view which has not been sufficiently noticed by moralists. It is foreign to our present purpose to enter into any particular explanation of the phenomenon. The fact will not be disputed by any who are at the trouble to remember how soothing they have felt the influence of affection, and how harassing the movements of sinful passion. It is evident that virtue possesses a power of calling up a whole train of pleasing thoughts and feelings, and that vicious action has an equally powerful influence in leading away the mind into an opposite channel, where it meets with everything that is disturbing and distressing. The stream raises along its banks a strip of verdure, composed of rich grass and foliage or of baleful weeds, according as its waters are pure or impure.

This power, according to the views above developed, is of a twofold kind. There is, first, the direct power which benevolent or malevolent affections possess of calling up analogous affections with all their pleasant or painful sensations. By this law of association, virtue and vice propagate themselves after their kind, and the species multiplies itself. There is, secondly, the power of conscience, with its train of feelings, as it reviews virtuous or vicious action. The most delightful frames of which the mind is susceptible, are those that are put in motion by an approving heart. In the rest which a pacified conscience gives, a solid peace is raised up to be a constant companion and help-meet for us. On the other hand, the bitterest feelings which agitate the human breast, are those which follow in the funereal wake of a condemning conscience. The pulsations that are thus set in motion differ in number and intensity, but they generally continue for a time;

the waves now carrying forward the mind to all that is holy and delightful, and again, when evil, casting it back upon a waste and barren shore. The delightful eagerness and buoyancy of the virtuous mind on the one hand, as well as the aching of the vicious man's heart on the other, proceed very much from this cause. It will appear in the next Chapter, that some of the wicked man's most maddening struggles have arisen from a desire to rid himself of this dreadful gnawing of a mind which is not at ease.

Fourthly, there is the general influence of virtuous and vicious affection upon the whole character. Independently altogether of the immediate emotions produced by virtuous affection and the contemplation of virtuous affection, and even of the immediate trains of feeling that follow, it has a general tendency to put the whole soul in a sound and healthy, and therefore in a buoyant and pleasant state. This is the most beneficent of all the effects of virtue. It arises from those nice arrangements which God hath instituted among the various powers and laws of the human mind, precisely analogous to those adjustments which we admire so much in the material world. It is by the skilful adaptation of these laws of association and feeling, one to another, that virtuous affection tends to produce a mind at ease and happy, and habitual virtue produces a soul blessed in all its moods and trains of sentiment and feeling. Peace, originating in virtue as its source, is made to shine upon the soul from all its faculties and feelings, as the light which comes from the sun reflected from and refracted in the atmosphere, shines upon the earth from every point, and in infinitely diversified colours. On the other hand, the tendency of vicious affection is to produce not only the misery which directly flows from it emotionally, and that which springs from an accusing conscience; but also to breed a disordered mind, wretched in every one of its trains of thought and feeling, and lashing itself into greater and more unappeasable fury.

II. Besides these internal there are also external pre-ordained consequences following from virtuous or vicious action. These spring from the pre-established harmony between the world within and the world without. These effects, like those contemplated under the former head, may be divided into various classes, according as they follow immediately or more remotely.

First, there is the immediate effect of virtuous action. As virtue consists in justice and benevolence, and modifications of them, it is manifest, that its exercises must usually consist in the multiplication of happiness; while the absence of virtue, and much more the existence of positive vice, must lead to consequences precisely opposite.

Secondly, there is the effect of virtue in producing confidence, and of vice in spreading a spirit of distrust throughout society. Where there is no internal confidence, no external bandage could hold society pleasantly together.

Besides these direct effects, there are, thirdly, the general results, good and evil, that flow from virtue and vice, through the arrangements of Divine providence. The success which generally follows the exertions of excellence, and the ultimate failure of wickedness, all attest that there is a Governor in this world upholding his own laws. If it is urged as an objection, that in many cases virtue, especially in its higher and bolder forms, is not successful; and that deceit is often allowed to triumph, the answer is obvious. While good purposes may be served by giving certain encouragement to goodness, it does not seem desirable to stimulate a mere artificial morality, by holding out the certainty of success. Were virtue in every case followed by its merited triumphs, there might be a risk that the triumph would be more valued than the qualities which led to it. The general countenance shown is sufficient to indicate the will of God; and anything beyond might be attended with incidental evils. It is also conceivable, that in a world under probation, advantage may arise from not exposing vice to instant failure—there being all the while, in the manifold visible judgments of heaven, sufficient indications of the Divine hatred of sin.

SECT. VIII.—GENERAL VIEW OF MAN'S ORIGINAL MORAL CONSTITUTION AS ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE CHARACTER OF GOD.

If there is any truth in the above remarks, it will at once be seen, how deep a foundation God has laid for morality in man's original constitution. Moral excellence is truly the whole powers and affections of the soul in healthy exercise; and in order to guard it, there is a faculty, with a train of corresponding feelings, presiding over all the other faculties, and seated in the very heart. Besides the original strength imparted, and the lofty position assigned to it, it has a whole train of attendants that wait upon it to obey its will, and to do it honour in the results which flow from it. It has this high place assigned to it in man's very constitution, which thus declares the high value which God sets upon it; and announces, too, what is the place which we should reserve for that God whom it represents. It is true that virtue has no such lofty position in man's present nature; but still there is evidence, in the sadly ruined building, that though the tower so battlemented, turreted, and guarded, has fallen, it was once the crowning object and defence of the fabric.

It has often been disputed whether virtue has its seat among the faculties or the feelings. This controversy has not unfrequently been a mere war of words. Persons who deny that it is in the intellect, mean by intellect, simply the reason distinguishing between truth and error. Those who deny that it lies in the feelings, mean by feelings the mere flying emotions which depend on the temperament of the mind. When we take a full view, we may discover both the exercise of a faculty and the play of feeling. In virtuous action, all the parts of the soul, and not merely one department of it, are called forth into vigorous exertion. There is the will followed by the sensibility, subordinated to the moral faculty, quickened by its appropriate emotion, and guiding the whole intellectual powers. It is the united anthem of praise, offered by every part of the human soul to God, its Maker and its King.

When the reflex moral faculty, or the conscience, surveys virtuous action, it proclaims it to be good. This faculty in unfallen beings is set as the guard of virtue, warning it of danger, and encouraging it by its smiles on the path of well-doing. But it can scarcely be repeated too frequently, that the possession of virtue and the possession of conscience are not the same. The existence of a judge in a land does not prove that the country is free from crime; nay, it seems rather to prove that there is a possibility of crime; and just as little does the presence of conscience prove that there can be no sin in the soul—it is rather meant to warn us of the danger of sin. In a pure and well-regulated mind, the office of conscience would have been a very easy and delightful one. Occasionally giving warning of danger, its grand office would have been to stimulate the virtuous affections, by the sanctions which it gave, and the rewards which it added, by means of the pleasing emotions which it excited.

We now feel as if we had a firm footing to stand on, when we rise from the character of man to the character of God. If the physical works of God reflect the Divine power and wisdom, the original moral constitution of man conducts us to a belief in still higher attributes.

So far as man can judge from his own nature, he must look upon God as distinguished, not only by the loftiness of his intellectual being, but by the loveliness of his affections. Some persons, with the view of exalting the Divine Being, would, with the ancient Stoics, strip him of everything that bears any resemblance to will or feeling, as existing in the human breast. He has been represented by such as a mere abstraction, calling forth no affection, because cherishing no affection. This whole representation proceeds on the idea, that intellect is so much higher than benevolence. Yet so far as man is concerned, every thinking mind must acknowledge, that the soul is existing in its highest state when it is cherishing a holy love; and that intellect is in its highest exercise when it is directing us to the object on which that love is to be fixed. Take away benevolence from a moral agent, and you take away the very quality of which the moral faculty approves. Take away affection, warm and living affection from God, and you take away the quality which most endears God to our souls; you take away, if we may so speak, the very heart of God—the heart which loves us, and calls forth our love in return.

In true affection there is the mingling of emotion and well-wishing. In emotions, the elements, we have seen, are excitement and attachment. In regard to excitement, there is no reason to think that there is anything corresponding to it in the bosom of Deity. But most assuredly there is holy attachment. We must be careful, indeed, to elevate him above weak and doting partialities, and above all that adhesiveness which springs from the earthly relationships of family, of kindred, and country; still there is complacency and delight in the affection of the Divine Being towards his works. And higher than this, there are benign sentiments of grace, tenderness, and compassion, leading him to feel the deepest interest in the welfare of his creatures, and calling forth corresponding feelings in their breasts towards him.

These same mental phenomena conduct us to a belief in another attribute of the Divine character. If we are led to believe that there is love in the Divine Being corresponding to virtuous affection in man, we are led by a like reason to believe that there is an attribute in God corresponding to the moral faculty in man. We are thus introduced to another feature of the Divine character—to the attribute which leads him to approve of that love which he ever cherishes, and to disapprove of everything of an opposite character. There is not only an infinite love in the Divine mind, but a perfect justice, commending, exalting, defending, and regulating that love.

It thus appears, that in the character of God there meet two co-ordinate moral attributes—infinite benevolence and infinite righteousness. We can conceive that there may be persons who wish that he had only the one of these without the other—that he had merely the affection without the holiness. But our wishes will not alter the nature of God, or make him different from what he is, and from what his works show him to be. It is easy, no doubt, to conceive of a being of exalted power, who cares only for the happiness, without looking to the holiness of his creatures, and we may call this being God; but he is not the living and the true God; he is no more the really existing God who is thus pictured by us, than are the idols which the heathens make and worship. The one is as much the creation of men's fancy, as the others are the workmanship of men's hands. If you ask, Why is his justice so unbending? we can only answer that such is his very nature; and that justice is as essential to the character of God, as even wisdom, or power, or goodness. Nor can the wishes, the complaints of sinful men or fallen angels, render him less strictly inflexible in his justice. Were he without this attribute, or were this attribute not infinite, he could not be a perfect God, our own minds being the judges. For we have discovered *that* in our own souls which testifies that God is holy, and approving of the exercise of this his holiness.

We are thus enabled, too, to explain in some measure the relation of the Divine love to the Divine holiness. These have often been represented as antagonist principles; and yet truly they are not so, though there are conceivable and actual circumstances in which their separate action might seem to tend in opposite ways. In themselves they are conspiring, and not conflicting principles. When Divine love is exercised, it has the approbation of Divine holiness ; and Divine holiness is exercised in honouring and guarding Divine love. God is love, is in his very will and affections love, and is led by his very nature to approve of that love which is in his very essence.

Let it be observed, however, that holiness is something more than the mere love of promoting happiness. It is not so much the love of promoting happiness, as the love of that pure love which seeks the promotion of happiness. This attribute, in one sense, is inferior to love, because its proper exercise consists in approving of love, and in guiding love. In another sense, it is the highest attribute in the Divine nature, higher than benevolence itself, for it sits in judgment upon benevolence, which it proclaims to be supremely and ineffably good, and regulates and directs that benevolence. Let us look up with equal admiration upon both, as constituting the two polar forces of the moral universe, the two essential elements of the moral perfection of God.

CHAPTER II.

ACTUAL MORAL STATE OF MAN.

SECT. I.—NATURE OF THE JUDGMENTS PRONOUNCED BY THE CONSCIENCE.

THE two inductive methods of acquiring knowledge in physical science are observation and experiment. It has been doubted whether the latter can be employed in investigating the processes of the human mind; and it should at once be admitted that it requires certain modifications in order to suit it to the new object to which it is directed. Even in the physical sciences, experiment in chemistry is somewhat different from experiment in mechanics, and experiment in physiology is different from experiment in unorganized bodies; and we must expect it to require some change before it can be applied to a spiritual substance. While it is most dangerous in some cases, and difficult in all, to experiment on the human mind, it may be safely and confidently asserted that experiment can be wrought upon it. We suspect that the poet Byron artificially put his mind in certain states with the view of calling forth those gloomy ideas and convulsive feelings which he has embodied in his poetry. Such experiments, it must be acknowledged, are very perilous, more so than those which Davy tried with inflammable gases, or than those which Hahnemann, the founder of the Homœopathic school of medicine, wrought upon the bodily frame, when he tried upon himself and upon a few friends those medicines which he adopted into his code. But the mental philosopher needs to submit to no such painful processes as those to which poets have subjected their feelings, and to which anatomists have exposed their own bodies and those of the lower animals. It is only requisite that he present before the mind an object fitted to set in action the particular faculty or feeling which he purposes to examine, and then carefully note the result. No faculty can be so successfully operated on in the way of experiment, as well as in the way of observation, as the conscience. It is a reflex faculty—Butler calls it the faculty of reflection—judging of the dispositions and voluntary acts of responsible beings. In order to detect the law of its operations, all that is required is to bring these mental states before it, and mark its judgments; and the decisions of this supreme court give us a correct exposition of the laws of the kingdom. This can be done as easily as material substances can be brought under the power of the magnet or galvanic wire. Care must be taken, in the one case as in the other, to separate between what is essential and what is accidental, and this may be done most successfully by varying the experiments, or performing them in new and different circumstances. In particular, pains must be taken, in examining the decisions of the moral faculty, to distinguish between its workings and those of certain cognate feelings, and particularly of the sympathetic emotions, which are so strong in our nature. These feelings, if we be not on our guard against them, will completely disturb the operations of the conscience, just as the iron in a ship disturbs the action of a magnet. In such cases, allowance must be made for the disturbing agent, or rather the object must be placed before the mind in such a way that the deflecting circumstance cannot operate.

It is after this manner that we would proceed to observe and experiment on the workings of the conscience with the view of noting its decisions, and thereby arriving at an exact estimate of the present moral condition of man. At this point we have to leave all the ordinary academic and scholastic writers on ethics behind us; but we are careful to take with us all the important truths regarding the essential and indestructible principles of man's moral nature which they have succeeded in establishing. We can admire with them the beauty of the constitution of man's moral nature, but we have often wondered that they have not seen the wide incongruity between their glowing descriptions of man as he ought to be, and the exhibitions given in our own hearts, and in the world, of man as he actually is. We are not inclined, indeed, to agree with many otherwise excellent divines in slighting the intimations of conscience in man's nature; in this respect we hold by the doctrines so firmly established by the philosophers. But, then, adopting these very principles of the philosophers, taking with us their declarations in regard to the authority of the conscience, we would bring them to bear upon the existing state of man.

In doing so, however, it may be useful to observe a little more minutely some of the laws of the working of the conscience.

First, It is of mental, and of mental acts exclusively, that the conscience judges. It has no judgment whatever to pronounce on a mere bodily act. We look out at the window, and we see two individuals in different places chastising two different children. The conscience pronounces no judgment in the one case or the other, whatever the feelings may do, until we have learned the motives which have led to the performance of the acts. If upon inquiry we find the motive in the one case to be the extreme care which the parent takes of the moral wellbeing of his child, and in the other case to be blind passion, we now approve of the one individual and disapprove of the other; but let it be observed, that the conscience pronounces its judgment not on the outward actions, but on the internal motives and feelings.

Secondly, It is of acts of the will, and of acts of the will exclusively, that the conscience judges. In saying so, we use *will* in a large sense, as large as that department which has been allotted to it, we believe, by God in the human mind. We employ it to include every exercise of mind in which there is choice, consent, preference, active rejection, wish, or intention. But these may extend themselves over acts of the mind which do not spring directly from the will. There are, we admit, spontaneous affections in the soul originating in instinctive or habitual tendencies, and apart from any voluntary excitation of them. Are these, it may be asked, neither morally good nor evil? The answer is, that they may, provided on the one hand the will has by some previous act produced these tendencies, or provided it now gives its adherence to them by attaching its consent, concurrence, or co-operation; for wherever the will enters, it carries with it responsibility. What is now a spontaneous tendency may have been produced by a succession of voluntary acts good or evil. Or the will may now be aiding and abetting the inclination to evil. A man reads an obscene book, and impure imaginations rise up in his mind, and the moral censor condemns the act, because he has been voluntarily doing what is fitted to call forth evil. Nay, when the spontaneous impulse tends to evil, and is not instantly restrained, the will must bear the blame of the results. In such ways as these the will may associate itself with every affection and action of the mind, and thus render them praise-worthy or blame-worthy. With this explanation the maxim will commend itself, that voluntariness is implied in all actions on which the conscience pronounces its sentence.

Thirdly, The conscience approves and disapproves not of isolated acts merely, but also of the mind or agent manifested in these acts. The conscience judges according to truth, and regards all mental acts as the mind acting, and pronounces its verdict, not so much on the abstract act as on the mind voluntarily acting in them. This may seem an unnecessarily metaphysical method of expressing an obvious truth, but, in the sequel, it will be found of no little consequence to be able precisely to determine what is the object at which the conscience looks, and on which it pronounces its judgments.

Fourthly, The conscience pronounces its decision on the state of mind of the responsible agent as the same is presented to it. It is not the business, or at least the direct office of the conscience, to determine what is the precise mental state—what is the wish, desire, intention, or resolution, of any responsible agent. This must be ascertained by the usual rules and laws of evidence, and by the use of the ordinary intellectual faculties. It is upon the voluntary acts of the mind, as they are represented to it, that the conscience utters its sentence. Thus, in the case which we have put of the two parents chastising their children, the one act presented to the conscience is that of a parent seeking, by proper punishment, to correct vice, and the other act is that of an individual cherishing passion, and acting upon it. It is upon this representation that the conscience proceeds, and, provided the representation be correct, the decision will be sound. But let it be observed, that the representation may be an erroneous one. Under the influence of hasty feeling or prejudice, we may have formed very incorrect judgments as to the real state of mind of the individuals whose conduct we have been observing. While the conscience has pronounced verdicts which are righteous in themselves, they may be mistaken in regard to the given individual; for the one parent may not have been under the influence of such high-minded virtue, nor the other the slave of passion, as has been supposed. The conscience is in the position of a barrister, whose opinion is asked in matters of legal difficulty. In both cases the judgment given proceeds on the supposed accuracy of a representation submitted, but which may be very partial, or very perverted.

It follows—*Fifthly, That there may be much uncertainty or confusion, or positive error, in the judgments of the conscience, because given upon false representations.* All the actions of man are of a concrete character; by far the greater number of his voluntary acts are of a very complex nature; and so it is difficult for the individual himself, and still more difficult for a neighbour, to determine what are the precise motives by which he is influenced in any given act. The springs of human action are often as difficult to be discovered as the true fountains of the great African rivers, which rise so far in the unapproachable interior; and there is room for endless disputes as to what is the originating and original motive, without which the act would not have been purposed or performed; and when we have fixed on any one source, we are not sure that there may not be others which could dispute with it the pre-eminence.

Meanwhile the conscience will pronounce its verdict upon the action according to the representation given by the other faculties of the mind. Present a concrete action, more particularly if a complex one, under one aspect, and the conscience will approve of it; present it under a different aspect, and the conscience will disapprove of it. Let warlike achievements, for instance, be looked at in the light of deeds of chivalry, romance, and courage, and the mind will be elevated by the very contemplation of them; and the clang of the trumpet will not so effectually stir up the war-horse, as the narrative of the exploits of heroes will awaken enthusiasm. But let us now contemplate the same actions under a different aspect; let us see the blood flowing in torrents, and hamlets and cities in flames; let us hear the groans of the wounded and dying, and the wails of the widows and orphans, as the news are brought to them of the friends that they have lost; let us inspect the hearts of the leaders in the combat, and observe the reigning pride, ambition, and jealousy; let us look into the hearts of their followers, and as we discover, besides the momentary excitement produced by the battle, nothing beyond a mercenary transaction, or the compulsory following of a chieftain—then our feelings change, and the scene is regarded with abhorrence and disgust.

It follows, that the conscience of two different individuals, or of the same individual at two different times, may *seem* to pronounce two different judgments on the same deed. We say *seem*, for in reality the two deeds are different, and the judgments differ, because the deeds, as presented to the conscience, are not the same. Thus, in the case which we have put, it is in the one instance the supposed devotedness and magnanimity that are commended; and in the other, it is upon the selfishness and cruelty of the parties that the condemnation is heaped. When Mercury stole Apollo's harp, Apollo was at first inclined to be angry; but afterwards forgot the crime in his admiration of the skill displayed in the perpetration of it. The Greeks, in this fable, furnish in the persons of their gods a true picture of human nature, and of the tendency of mankind to overlook the moral qualities of actions, and fix their attention on other features, fitted to call forth other than moral feelings.

From the general cause now referred to have proceeded, if we do not mistake, those irregularities and apparent inconsistencies in the decisions of conscience which have so puzzled and confounded ethical and metaphysical inquirers. The approval which was thought to have been given by the conscience to the widow burning herself on the funeral pile of her husband in India, and to deceit when successful among the ancient Spartans, and to the murder of children in the South Sea islands, and the exposing of the aged, and of helpless children in Africa—all originate in false views presented of the devotedness of the widow, of the heroism of the Spartan youth who succeeds in compassing a difficult end, and of the misery to which the helpless, whether from youth or age, might be exposed, if left to drag out an existence for the sustenance of which no adequate provision could be made.

It is becoming evident, that the conscience may be in the breast of an individual, and exerting itself in a kind of way, while his whole moral judgments are utterly perverted.

Sixthly, The decisions of the conscience are of various kinds. They may be classified as follows:—First, it authoritatively demands that certain actions be done. Secondly, it authoritatively insists that certain actions be not done. Thirdly, it declares that the performance of the first class of actions is good, commendable, rewardable. Fourthly, it announces that the omission of the first, or commission of the second class is wrong, condemnable, punishable. Philosophic moralists have confined their attention almost exclusively to the first or the first and third of these classes of decisions, and have not dared to look fairly at the other two, and at the consequences which necessarily flow from them. Yet the second and fourth are as certainly and as loudly proclaimed as the first and third. It is by the fourth that there is awakened a sense of guilt—a sentiment no less strongly impressed on man's mind than a sense of merit. It is by it, too, that there is raised up that fear of a supernatural power, and of coming judgments, which is felt at times at least by all savage tribes, indeed by all mankind, except in so far as it may be suppressed by speculative unbelief or artificial means. The feeling of reproach as to the past, and of apprehension as to the future, is one of the characteristics of humanity, and he who overlooks it, has lost sight of one of the most striking qualities in our nature, and must have in consequence a very imperfect, nay a positively erroneous view of man's moral condition. It is this sentiment which, more than anything else, has retained the idea of God—in some cases very vaguely—among all nations; it is upon it that the Christian missionary seeks to operate in addressing heathen nations; it is this same feeling which constrains all men to feel, at least on certain occasions, that they need a religion. The moral monitor in man closes all its proclamations by pointing to God as a Judge and to a day of righteous retribution.

SECT. II.—INFLUENCE OF A DEPRAVED WILL UPON THE MORAL JUDGMENTS.

The will, we have seen, is the seat of responsibility. At the side of the will, which is free, God hath placed in the soul a law which is fixed. The morally good consists in the conformity of the free will to the fixed law. Sin, on the other hand, consists essentially in the will refusing to submit itself to the moral law of God. Let us now suppose that the will of a responsible being has set itself free from the restraints of the moral law. Let us suppose that man is such a being—we say *suppose*, for at present we assume it, leaving the proof till afterwards. We are now to shew that this perverted and rebellious will may come to exercise a reflex influence for evil upon the decisions of the conscience.

It is not difficult to explain this phenomenon of the influence of the will upon the other faculties of the mind. Dr. Brown has some ingenious speculations on this subject. "That it is of the very nature of emotions to render more vivid all the mental affections with which they are peculiarly combined, as if their own vivacity were in some measure divided with these, every one who has felt any strong emotion must have experienced. The eye has, as it were, a double quickness to perceive what we love or hate—what we hope or fear. Other objects may be seen slightly; but these, if seen at all, become instantly permanent, and cannot appear to us without impressing their presence in stronger feeling on our senses and on our soul."* He then shews how this vividness, producing a permanence of the emotion, influences, in a powerful manner, the whole train of association. We are not quite sure, however, that this is an adequate explanation of the phenomena. The emotional nature of any state of mind must of course produce liveliness; and this liveliness may, according to some law of the human mind, have an influence upon that state of mind. But it is not to be forgotten that the liveliness is one thing, and the permanence another thing, though Dr. Brown seems to slide unconsciously from the one to the other. The permanence of a thought, accompanied with will, arises, we maintain, from the direct power of the will retaining the thought.

We are quite aware that the will cannot *directly* call up any absent idea, or any idea not immediately before the mind. To will a given recollection into existence, is already to be in possession of that recollection. But the mind, while yet without the precise recollection, may know that there is a recollection which it is desirable to recall. If we have forgot, for example, the name of an individual, whose person and character we distinctly remember, we cannot by the direct power of the will call up the name; but by an act of the will, we may keep the recollection of the man's person and character before us, till his name is suggested by the natural process of association.

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* Lect. 31.

The will has thus a direct and an indirect power over the train of thought and feeling. It has a direct power in retaining any given thought or idea; for as long as the will to retain it exists, that very will keeps the idea before the mind. The will has also a most important indirect influence. In detaining any given idea or recollection, it can command a whole train of association connected with it. In retaining the idea of a mother, for instance, and dwelling upon it, it may recall all the pleasant scenes of childhood, of tenderness and unwearied care, that are associated with her. The will has also a power of driving away an unpleasant thought, not directly but indirectly, by willingly following other trains, and taking steps to call up such trains of association. We wish, let us suppose, to banish the recollection of some wound or sore which grates on our sensibility: we cannot do so directly, but we can accomplish our end effectually, by rushing into some other scene fitted to interest us, and there following the train of conception that is started. Or we wish to rid ourselves of the recollection of an unhandsome, ungenerous deed which has been done to us: we cannot effect this by dwelling on the deed, but we may accomplish our end by meditating on some other subject, as upon the far greater provocation which we ourselves have given to our heavenly Lord.

It appears, then, that in the influence exercised by the will, there is first the retention of a fixed idea, and then the clustering around this of other ideas, with their corresponding feelings. And let us suppose that the ideas suggested are fitted to raise emotions, there will now not only be the influence of the will, but of the emotions which are excited. But conceptions of moral good and evil are all accompanied with emotions more or less lively, as are also all the objects which are fitted to sway the will. It is easy to understand, then, how in all cases in which the conscience and will are in joint operation there should be the influence of emotion. Now, it is a law of mental operation that emotions tend to quicken the train of ideas in the mind. When the mind is in an emotional state, the thoughts flow as in torrents, and the feelings fly as with a hurricane velocity. In the phenomena now to be considered, there may thus be a power of will retaining a radical thought, and a power of emotion collecting around it a rapid succession of thoughts and feelings.

The tendency of will and desire is to retain the favourite thought and feeling. The tendency of emotion, on the other hand, is to accelerate the mental states. This difference of influence on the train of association is one of the many proofs which may be urged to establish the difference between the optative and emotional parts of man's nature. But while desire and emotion are different, desire is commonly connected with emotion, inasmuch as the objects which lead to desire also stir up emotion. It is to the power of emotion that we owe, to some extent, the immense number of ideas and feelings which are congregated round a common point, while we owe the stability of the point of attraction not to the emotion connected with the desire, but to the desire itself. We desire that a friend, a mother in ill health, may recover; and we owe the number of the plans of recovery suggested to the rapidity of thought caused by the emotions which the very conception of that mother raises; but we owe the continuance of the fundamental thought to the influence of a deeper part of our constitution obeying very different laws. The desire, in short, is the central body, and the thoughts and emotions the lesser bodies which dance around it. No doubt, that central body has also its motions, but they are round another centre, constituting the true motive power of the human mind.

In all those states of mind in which we have both will and emotion, we have thus a double class of phenomena, a principle of permanence and a principle of change—a continuous thought, and a succession of thoughts—a centre, and bodies circling round it. We have the same things as the ancient Romans had when the body of Virginia was brought forth to the people; or when Antony exposed the body of Cæsar—lifting up the toga, exhibiting to the people the blood-stained garment, and pointing to the wounds by which their friend had been murdered—till the multitude, under a tumult of feelings excited by the object before them, tore in pieces those who were supposed to be associated with the murder, and demolished or burnt the houses of the conspirators. And so, too, in the will there is an object continuously presented before the mind, and this object gathering round it a whole host of feelings.

The intense desire thus keeps the thought fixed, and the feelings keep other thoughts playing around it. When the object is of a pleasant kind, and is agreeably associated, all the feelings are of a delightful nature, and the desire becomes a source and centre of happiness diffused around it, as heat is from a fire, as light is from the sun. On the other hand, when the object contemplated is painful, when it is the desire to avoid punishment, for instance, or to flee from an angry God, then the feelings, while intensely active, are all intensely distressing, and the mind moves round a point like the fretted animal round the post to which it is chained, or like the moth fluttering about the light which is to consume it.

The will, whether it exists in the shape of desire or positive purpose, has, it thus appears, an influence, direct and indirect, upon the train of thought and feeling. But the will, being responsible for its acts, is responsible for all the effects which these acts produce. If these are evil, the mind cannot escape from the blame, on the ground that they are not immediately voluntary. There may be acts in the highest degree sinful, though not proceeding immediately from the will. As proceeding really, though not directly, from the will, it must be held as accountable for them. The depraved will has undoubtedly to answer for all the brood which it may hatch. Those who sow dragon's teeth must be prepared to take the blame of all the deeds which the armed men who spring up may perform. A rebellious will may thus be responsible for errors which are in themselves merely intellectual, just as the drunkard is held accountable in every court of law for the acts which he commits during intoxication. A perverted will may be chargeable with the full blame of a state of disordered feeling produced by it, just as the opium-eater has to take the guilt of those frightful images which his cherished habit has necessarily called up.

Dr. Chalmers has shown how mere emotions, through their connexion more or less remote with the will, may become morally good and morally evil. "It is this which imparts virtuousness to emotion, even though there be nothing virtuous which is not voluntary. It is true that, once the idea of an object is in the mind, its counterpart emotion may, by an organic or pathological law, have come unbidden into the heart. The emotion may have come unbidden, but the idea may not have come unbidden. By an act of the will it may, in the way now explained, have been summoned, at the first, into the mind's presence, and at all events it is by a continuous act of the will that it is detained and dwelt upon." "It cannot bid compassion into the bosom apart from the object which awakens it; but it can bid a personal entry into the house of mourning, and then the compassion will flow apace; or it can bid a mental conception of the bereaved and afflicted family there, and then the sensibility will equally rise whether a suffering be seen or a suffering be thought of. In like manner, it cannot bid into the breast the naked and unaccompanied feeling of gratitude, but it can call to recollection, and keep in recollection, the kindness which prompts it, and the emotion follows in faithful attendance on its counterpart object. It is thus that we can will the right emotions into being, not immediately, but mediately—as the love of God, by thinking on God—a sentiment of friendship, by dwelling in contemplation on the congenial qualities of our friend—the admiration of moral excellence, by means of a serious and steadfast attention to it. It is thus, too, that we bid away the wrong emotions, not separately and in disjunction from the objects, for the pathological law which unites objects with emotions [is it not rather conceptions with emotions?] we cannot break asunder, but we rid our heart of the emotions by ridding our mind of their exciting and originating thoughts—of anger, for instance, by forgetting the injury; or of a licentious imagination, by dismissing from our fancy the licentious image, or turning our sight and our eyes from viewing vanity."*

But the will exercises an indirect influence, not only upon the emotions, but also upon the judgment. It is proverbial, indeed, that the wishes of the heart exercise a most powerful influence upon the common judgments of the mind. It has not been so frequently observed, that the will may sway in a prejudicial manner the moral judgments. This phenomenon is to be explained in much the same way as those to which we have referred.

Here we must take along with us some of the observations made in the last section upon the working of the moral faculty.

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* Moral Philosophy, chap. v.

The conscience, it must be remembered, is a reflex faculty, pronouncing its decision upon the case as submitted to it. In order to observe how the will is fitted to sway the decisions of the conscience, let us suppose that it is bent upon a particular course of conduct, and suggests its performance to the mind. Cæsar has come to the river Rubicon, and is bent upon reaching Rome. He knows that the crossing of this stream is a violation of the laws of his country; but when the thought of this occurs to him, he speedily banishes it. Other thoughts meanwhile rise up before his mind, and are cherished—the evil which Pompey and his faction are doing in Rome, and the benefit which his country might derive from their expulsion. We believe Cæsar, in the act, to have been swayed by ambition, and not a perverted moral sense; yet we can conceive how, in the way now indicated, he may have succeeded in deceiving the moral faculty, and justifying his conduct to himself. Or let us suppose, as a case more in point, that certain of the conspirators against Cæsar are bent upon ridding themselves of one who is regarded by them as having robbed his country of its liberties. It is easy to see how, by dwelling on one aspect of the case, under the influence of desire, the deed, as a whole, might come to be regarded as in the highest degree commendable. The desert of the ambitious tyrant will be seen in fearfully dark colours, and the mind will fondly dwell on the immediate and glorious advantages which are to arise from his overthrow; and these features being vividly presented to the conscience, while the other aspects of the deed are carefully concealed, the conscience will now give its approval, and the parties rush to the commission of the deed, as one which they are imperatively called to perform.

Assuming, then, (for the proof must be deferred to a succeeding section,) that the will goes wrong, it is conceivable that THREE GENERAL EFFECTS OF A PREJUDICIAL KIND may follow from the will deceiving the conscience.

(1.) We mistake, in regard to certain actions, *calling that which is good evil, and that which is evil good.* The will accomplishes this, by presenting the evil and the good in a false light. The action being a complex one, the will may present it only under one aspect, and thus draw forth a false judgment. A good act, which we are unwilling to perform, comes to be presented as leading to pain, or to certain prejudicial consequences, and the conscience is led to give its disapproval of it. An evil act, which we are bent upon committing, comes to be seen only as leading to happiness, and the conscience is kept from laying a sentence of disapprobation upon it. Doubts may arise as to the accuracy of these judgments, upon other views involuntarily suggesting themselves to the mind; but the will contrives to drive them away with all available speed.

Thus it is, that sin comes to be adopted as morally good. Hence the difficulty of getting a favourite sin condemned. Charge it at any one point, and it immediately assumes the name of some virtue to which it bears a partial resemblance. Is the man forgetting God, and the duties which he owes to him, that he may, through deep anxiety, and a contempt of present comforts, amass wealth, and purchase earthly possessions?—he calls his conduct by the name of industry. Is he selfishly and systematically employed in raising himself step by step in society, to the disregard of all higher claims?—he professes to be swayed by an innocent regard to the respect of his fellow-men. Is he in the way of despising the poor, of fostering a spirit of revenge, and avoiding the confession of sin?—his conduct passes for spirit and magnanimity. Is he addicted to rudeness, to quarrelsomeness, and profanity?—he claims the merit due to independence of thinking and acting. Is he led to give a servile obeisance to the prevailing opinion, or conceal his sentiments in the presence of persons of rank and name?—he shelters his conduct under the guise of modesty and civility of manners. It is in this way that we account for the perverted moral judgments of mankind.

(2.) *Men form too favourable an estimate of their own character.* A number of circumstances contribute to this end.

First of all, there is an unwillingness on the part of those who have committed sin, candidly to inspect themselves. Just as the impenitent criminal would avoid the bar of the judge and the examination of the witnesses, so would the sinner flee from the sifting inspection of the moral law. Just as the murderer would visit any spot on this earth's wide surface rather than that at which the deed was committed, and recollect any scene of his past life more willingly than the blood which he shed, and the shrieks of the dying victim; so would the sinner draw back from everything that might remind him of his guilt. Or, if constrained to admit an investigation, he will yet contrive, like Rachel, to keep one spot concealed, and that the one in which he retains the idols of his worship,—and the inquiry terminates in a more confirmed deception.

Hence we find that of all branches of knowledge, the knowledge of ourselves and of our sins is that which is most neglected. In all other sciences, knowledge flatters our vanity, raises us in the eyes of our neighbours, increases our influence in society ; but a searching inquiry into the state of our heart wounds our pride, and lowers us in our own esteem. Hence it is that we meet continually with persons possessed of great shrewdness and sagacity in all other matters, who are most lamentably ignorant of themselves. Many have attained an extraordinary knowledge of mankind in general, and can discern at once the weak points of every neighbour, but are pitiably blind to every one of their own infirmities ; it is amusing to observe, that of the whole circle of their acquaintanceship, they are perhaps the only persons to whom their failings are unknown. There are individuals, skilled in all other science, utterly ignorant of this ; capable of calculating the motions of the heavenly bodies, and yet knowing nothing of the movements of their own hearts—of predicting the eclipses of the sun and planets, but unacquainted with the dark spots on their own characters—of decomposing the material substances around them, but not of analyzing the motives by which they are swayed. Many, we suspect, pass from the cradle to the grave under the influence of divers views, feelings, impulses, and passions ; but without once stopping to inquire what is the relation in which they stand to God and his law. Rather than confess the danger, by casting out their sounding-lines and measuring the depths, they permit themselves to drift along they know not whither, till at last death, like the cry of "Breakers a-head !" awakes them from their lethargy, but only to shew them stranded as a wreck on the shores of eternity. This unwillingness on the part of the human heart to submit to examination —this shrinking from inspection—this trembling and shaking, and studious concealment—all are indicative of conscious guilt. The party would not be so disinclined to look into his accounts, were he not afraid to discover losses, debt, and probable bankruptcy. The limb would not so shrink were there not disease preying upon it.

Yet it is easy to see how, in consequence of this unwillingness to look at the sin, it may readily escape detection. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." These two characteristics have a very close connexion. On the one hand, the heart is so deceitful just because it is so desperately wicked. It shews its wickedness by its deceitfulness. It is because of its darkness that it is so fitted for concealment and seduction. On the other hand, the deceitfulness of the heart tends to hide its wickedness from the view. Unless we are on our guard against its power to deceive us, we shall never become acquainted with its desperate wickedness.

But there is something more than a mere *negative* ignorance produced by a deceitful heart. Mankind come to clothe themselves in a *positive* way with qualities which they do not possess.

When man would look to his *past* life, the heart interposes, and exhibits everything through a false and flattering medium. Distance in space, we know, gives a particular hue to the objects seen ;—thus, we read of the Blue Mountains, though no mountains are in reality of a blue colour. Distance in time may have a somewhat similar colouring effect on the objects looked at. By the natural process of association under the influence of desire, the mind recalls most readily those parts of our past life which may seem creditable to our talents and virtues, and consigns all else to oblivion. We meditate with delight on our generosity, real or imaginary, our patience under suffering, our courage in the hour of danger. We remember how we outstript others in the path of duty, how we advanced when they shrank, and stood when they fell. We fondly dwell on the success which has attended our schemes, on the compliments which have been paid us, on the honours heaped on us ; and when we think of our want of success, it is to attribute the whole to the folly of friends, or the malice of enemies. In the meantime, a thousand evil actions and evil feelings are willingly forgotten. We never forget that we gave a certain sum in charity, but we forget that it was only the tenth or the hundredth part of what we expended on folly. The memory, like a skilful flatterer, thus brings before us those deeds which we delight to hear of, and leaves all others unnoticed; or should these others at times force themselves upon the attention, the heart has a variety of excuses to urge. The act was committed in our younger years, and it is suggested that it was merely a deed of youthful folly, implying no great criminality; or palliating circumstances are discovered to lessen or excuse its guilt. Has the person been indulging evil temper or violent passion?—he at length brings himself to believe that this was highly proper, when, as he now perceives, so much malice was intended. His cunning he will dignify with the name of wisdom, selfishness is called prudence, and his profligacy, the becoming enjoyment of the pleasures of this world.

The will exercises an equally prejudicial influence when men look to their *present* character. The view which we get of an object depends on the position which we take: thus every man sees his own rainbow and his own aurora borealis. From the position at which he views himself, man gets a delusive view of his own character. He imagines that he possesses good qualities, which, as all neutral persons know, do not belong to him; and is unconscious of infirmities of which all his friends are cognizant. He never doubts of his own fortitude and firmness, at the very time that all others fear that he will shrink in the hour of trial. He imagines that he is generous when others know that he is selfish. It would be laughable, were it not rather pitiable, to see him so self-deluded, while others are so fully aware of his weaknesses.

The heart yet further deceives us when we would look to our *future* intentions. It seduces us in this way, when it fails in every other. Even when mankind have been constrained to discover that they have acted improperly in time past, they cherish the belief that they may wipe out the stain by their future exertions. In particular, they are apt to imagine, that they can perform any deed on their forming a momentary resolution to do so. The young man fancies that he can keep his character pure in the midst of abounding corruption, and attain to any excellence which for the time he may resolve to reach. He wonders to see individuals farther advanced in life so sunk in criminality. He thinks not that in his future life he may descend, step by step, the same dark path of vice, till he becomes the subject of similar wonder. And yet other men will not profit by his fall, any more than he profited by that of others; for every one imagines that he has some peculiar charm by which he can resist all the enchantments of vice, and come forth unhurt from its dangerous presence.

Nothing else is so deceitful as a perverted will. It is more cunning than the most expert thief, craftier than the deepest politician, more artful than the wiliest hypocrite, more plausible than the most skilful flatterer. If we must sometimes be on our guard against the treachery of our fellow-men, it behoves us to exercise a still more watchful jealousy over ourselves. Every wise man is sensitive as to the first approaches of that flattery which interested parties give him, but we have all greater cause to dread the flattery which the deceitful heart is sending up as incense. Others, in their attempts to deceive us, can have access to us only at certain times, and in particular ways; but the heart presents its delusive suggestions at all times, and by an infinite variety of channels. Much as there is among us of deception, of the deception of one man by his neighbour, there is much more of self-deception. Of all flattery, self-flattery is the most common.

And what is the general result of all this willing self-deceit? The man becomes full of himself, of his past conduct, his present character, and his purposes for the future. He constructs for himself a fictitious character of extraordinary excellence, which he is bound to admire. "Surely every man walketh in a vain show." A state of things is produced, as delusive as the scenes of a novel, as deceptive as the exhibitions of the stage; and he moves in the midst of them as a hero. The glare of lamps in a theatre, the curtains raised and dropped at the appropriate time, the perspective, the dresses, the personifications in tone and manner, do not so deceive the spectator, and call up feelings so unsuited to the reality, as the stage pictures and actings which the fancy creates at the bidding of the will—and all that men may be able to personate a character which they do not possess, and to admire themselves in that character. Nor can there be a greater contrast between the possibly mean, mercenary, villanous actor and the noble character personified by him, between the actress of doubtful reputation and the chastity which she represents, than there is between the real man with his sins and the magnanimous hero pictured in his imagination. The mind is deceived by the one exhibition as by the other; and as the actor receives plaudits for the generosity of the sentiments uttered by him, and the actress excites sympathy from the sufferings which she is supposed to undergo, so do mankind claim the admiration due to the fictitious character which they have assumed. Catherine of Russia, when she travelled through her waste dominions, caused painted villages to be raised along her route, that she might be enabled to give way to the imagination that her country was flourishing and populous. It is in such a delusion that mankind in general pass through life, raising up around them, by the power of their own imaginations, a host of supposed good qualities, in the midst of which they walk, as the statues of the gods walk in the processions, listening to a constant hymn in their own praise.

The hypocrite is commonly supposed to be the most profound of all characters. But there is a deeper and more dangerous deceit. There are persons who come to act the hypocrite to themselves. He who has been deluded by his neighbour for years is not more astonished when his eyes are opened, than are the persons now referred to, when their own character stands fully revealed to them.

(3.) *The mind becomes completely perverted and disordered.* We hold, that a mind which had submitted itself in every respect to the law of God could not be led to pronounce a perverted judgment; but when the will has set itself in rebellion against its law, that is, against God, it is conceivable that sin may soon spread itself through the whole soul. This is one of the most fearful of all the tendencies of sin—its tendency to propagate itself, to "yield seed after its kind." The weed getting into a garden or field does not so speedily or certainly, by roots and winged seeds, spread over the whole space, as sin entering the mind spreads itself through all the faculties and feelings. If we do not mistake, it is the most fearful element in what divines call spiritual death, being a blindness and perversion of mind produced by indulgence in sin. The very mind and conscience become defiled. We can conceive a mind so utterly perverted by an habitual deception practised upon itself, that at length it can scarcely tell what is right from what is wrong, or find out clearly the path of duty even when it has a passing desire to discover it. We know no condition more pitiable than that of the man who has become thus bewildered through the original wanderings of a wayward inclination, and now knows not how to return to the path of duty; for he has tracked so many byways, all leading from the right path, that he has a difficulty, at every step, of knowing the path which he should take.

SECT. III.—JUDGMENT PRONOUNCED BY THE CONSCIENCE UPON THE CHARACTER OF MAN.

Much of what we have advanced in last section is hypothetical. On the supposition that the heart is wicked, we have shown how it may be deceitful. We are now to enter upon the proof of its wickedness.

We may come to discover the moral character of man in two ways—first, by bringing the conscience to judge of him; and, secondly, taking with us proper ideas of what moral good is, we may inquire if he possesses it. The first is the method followed in this section. We are to arraign man at the bar of his own conscience.

(1.) It will not be difficult to show that the conscience *condemns certain actions committed by us.* Let the purest man on earth pause, and make his past conduct pass under the cognizance of his conscience, the conscience will at once condemn particular portions of it. In short, the conscience announces to every man that he has sinned.

Now, there is much more implied in this decision than those are aware of who have not reflected on the subject. The conscience has, in the name of God, pronounced its sentence; and the question occurs, How is this sentence to be removed? Conscience declares to every individual that he has sinned, but it points out no way by which the sin may be forgiven. It has solemnly pronounced its sentence; but does it ever lift off the sentence? It condemns at this present time the sin which we committed yesterday; but will it not also condemn the same deed, when submitted to it ten or fifty years hence? Is there any lapse of time, any change of circumstances, which will induce the conscience to revoke its own judgments?

Upon genuine repentance, accompanied with reparation, is the answer which some will be inclined to give. Every one acquainted with the elements of Christian divinity knows that this view cannot stand investigation. We enter not at present into the question, as to whether repentance be in the native power of a being who has once fallen into sin. That remorse is available to him, we doubt not; but remorse, instead of pacifying the mind, only exasperates it. But we insist upon a more positive ground. Repentance, in many cases, can make no possible reparation for the injury which has been inflicted. The murderer's repentance, for instance, cannot bring back the murdered man from the judgment-seat of God to which he has been hurried, nor dry up the tears of the widow and orphans that he left behind. Repentance, in many cases, cannot make reparation to the injured parties, and in no case can it make reparation to the law of God. We cannot conceive that the Governor of the universe should proclaim throughout the world which he has created, that his intelligent creatures may break his law, and inflict injury as they please, and then that they will be forgiven on the profession of repentance. Does it not seem, as if the conscience would condemn such a mode of governing the universe if presented to it? We think it evident, at least, that the conscience gives no intimation that it will withdraw its sentence, upon repentance following the guilty deed. All that it declares is, that penitence is a becoming act on the part of the transgressor. It would visit the impenitent with a double sentence—first upon the primary sin, and then upon his present hardness of heart, and continued spirit of rebellion. While repentance, when genuine, may be our present duty, it does not appear as if it could make any atonement for past transgression; or make the conscience do anything more than declare that this penitent frame of mind is not in itself sinful, and that he who cherishes it is better than the individual who first commits the sin, and then doubles it by forgetting it or glorying in it.

We point, then, to the adverse sentence of the conscience, and ask for a statement of the circumstances in which it can be led to withdraw the sentence which it has pronounced. We have never seen such a statement clearly and distinctly drawn out; and until that is done, we must continue to believe that the conscience, acting in the name of God, continues to leave its awful sentence upon us, without giving the least indication of an escape. And all this seems to be implied in the admission, that we have committed so much as one action condemned by the conscience. But there is a farther and a more difficult and delicate inquiry to be made—in regard to the extent of human sinfulness as declared by the moral faculty.

(2.) We now inquire whether the conscience *approves of any one state of the mind when the same is truly represented?* In making this inquiry, it will be needful to keep in view some of the laws of the operations of conscience noticed in a preceding section, and also the influence which the will exercises upon the representation made to the moral faculty of any given action. We must remember that the conscience pronounces its verdict of approval or disapproval, not upon the outward act, but upon the inward state of the agent, and that it judges of this state according to the representation given to it. Pains must be taken, then, in submitting any action to the decision of the conscience, to submit not a mere bodily act but a mental state of the agent, and to submit the actual mental state. If the real state of the agent's soul is not laid before the conscience, it may give far too favourable a decision. The difficulty of this whole investigation lies in determining the precise condition of the soul at any given time. In by far the greater number of our actions possessed of moral characteristics, the motives, direct and indirect, immediate and ultimate, are very numerous; and when there have been so many determining feelings, it is extremely difficult to discover the predominating one; not unfrequently it contrives to lie altogether concealed in the complicated folds of the human breast.

But here, we shall suppose, is an individual resolved to ascertain, in the light of his conscience, his precise moral state, being aware meanwhile of the deceitfulness of his heart. This man will soon find, that the more closely he investigates his heart and conduct, it is the more difficult to arrive at felt certainty. The difficulty which he experiences arises, not so much from a want of clearness in the decisions of the conscience when the case is stated, as in determining what is the case—that is, the precise motive by which he is swayed, and the actual state of his mind at any given instant. Were he quite sure that he had been swayed by pure and benevolent motives at the time referred to, he knows what the decision of the moral faculty would be; but the deeper the investigation, and the greater the spirit of candour by which he is actuated, it is seen to be the more difficult to determine the exact influence under which he acted. This inquirer, in very proportion to his honesty, is the more puzzled and distressed; and he may be tempted at last, as he feels himself beset by thickening difficulties, to take one or other of two courses—either to cease from the inquiry altogether, and to flatter himself with the thought, that he is often or commonly a virtuous agent; or to abandon himself to doubt, distraction, and terror, and as he feels the painfulness of these feelings, to betake himself to superstition, and every kind of bodily exercise that may be fitted to deaden or delude the moral sense. One or other of the results now indicated has commonly been the issue—an uninquiring self-satisfaction, or an uneasy self-suspicion, which drives the individual to the readiest refuge that may present itself, and in which he may, by certain acts supposed to be pleasing to God, allay the reproaches by which he is troubled. Such is the issue in which conscience lands us—it drives us to thoughtlessness, or it goads us to madness. We see it strikingly exhibited in the case of those whose crimes are peculiarly aggravated—as in that of the guilty spendthrift, who has brought multitudes to ruin—or in that of the murderer, with the pangs of his dying victims ever rising up freshly before his mind; such persons either contrive to give themselves up to utter unconcern, or, in restless and feverish discontent, they pursue every superstitious ceremony which may hold out the hope of appeasing an offended God.

But we suppose that there is an individual sufficiently earnest to resist all the allurements which would turn him aside, and sufficiently enlightened to discover the inefficacy of superstitious observances; to what result would he be conducted? He would settle down, we apprehend, in a most painful uncertainty, quite conscious that sin had been committed, and yet ignorant of any means by which sin can be forgiven, and scarcely knowing whether he has ever so much as done one virtuous act.

It seems to be difficult or impossible, then, by a simple direct inspection of the state of mind at any given time, to determine whether it is truly virtuous. But let us inquire, whether there may not be certain general principles which guide us out of our uncertainty, and land us in clear and distinct, though it may be very humbling, views of ourselves.

And, first, it is a general principle that, in judging of a responsible agent at any given time, we ought to take into view the whole state of his mind. We ought not to single out a particular part, or view it under an exclusive aspect. It is here, as we have seen, that there is room for partiality and endless delusion. The conscience, as a divinely appointed arbiter, judges according to truth, and judges not the abstract act, but the agent in the act; and if it judges correctly of the agent, it must take into view his whole moral state and motive.

As a second general principle, it must be taken into account, that the mental state of the agent cannot be truly good, provided he is in the meantime neglecting a known and manifest duty. It will not be difficult to establish this principle, which is a necessary consequent of the first; and when admitted, the two include all men under sin.

Take as an illustration, a boy arrived at the age of responsibility, running away from his parents, without provocation of any kind. Very possibly, in the midst of the companions whom he meets with, he may be cheerful, kind, and obliging. Present this disinterested kindness to the moral faculty, and it will approve it as something becoming; and if nothing else is observed, it may seem as if he merited our warmest approbation. But present the whole complex moral state of the boy to the conscience, and the judgment will be instantly reversed. As long as this child is living in neglect of a bounden duty, the moral sense refuses to give a single mark of approval; all his kindness will not draw a single smile of complacency from the rightly constituted mind, till he return to his father's house, and to his proper allegiance.

Analogous instances will present themselves to the reflecting mind. A person, let us suppose, has unjustly got possession of a neighbour's property. It is conceivable, that, having done so, he may be benevolent in the use which he makes of his wealth; his hospitality may be the theme of admiration throughout the whole neighbourhood, and the praise of his charity may be in the mouths of hundreds of the destitute. Now, if this individual's original dishonesty is not established on sufficient evidence, we may, in the judgment of charity, give him credit for generosity; but when the whole man is brought under our notice, the mind can give one, and but one judgment, and that is to condemn him, even when he is at the head of his own hospitable board, and scattering his munificence all around him.

Or take the case of a Brazilian sugar-planter fitting out a slave-ship, with instructions to the crew to proceed to the coast of Africa, there to seize on a company of unoffending negroes, and bring them as slaves to his plantation. He makes it part of his instructions, that the captives shall be treated with great lenity on the voyage; and upon their landing, he does everything which kindness and consideration can prompt, to promote their comfort. Now, present the one side of this man's conduct to the mind—let a stranger be taken rapidly over the plantation, let him see the food provided for the slaves, the comfortable dwellings in which they reside, and the amusements allowed them, and there may be a sentence of approval pronounced; but present both sides of the picture, and the sentence will assuredly be one of severe reprobation.

A husband making ample temporal provision for the wife causelessly forsaken, the libertine lavishing kindness on the person whom he has seduced, and with whom he is living in a state of sin—these are cases in point, as showing how the conscience may approve of a moral agent on his conduct being represented only under one aspect, and yet disapprove of it when brought fully under review; and showing, too, how the moral faculty cannot approve of an agent, even when doing an act good in itself, provided he is in a bad moral state, and living in the meanwhile in neglect of a clear and bounden duty.

History presents many examples of such a mixture of motives. Lilienhorm had been raised from obscurity and wretchedness by Gustavus, king of Sweden, promoted to the rank of commandant of the guard, and had the complete confidence of his sovereign. But when a conspiracy was formed against his master, he joined it, instigated by the hope held out to him of commanding the national guard, and holding in his hand the destinies of the kingdom. Meanwhile he endeavoured, by a kind of compromise, to keep his allegiance to the king his benefactor. He wrote him an anonymous letter, informing him of an unsuccessful attempt that had been made to take his life some time before, describing the plan which the conspirators had now formed, and warning him against going to a particular ball, where the assassination was to be committed. In this way he sought to satisfy his conscience, when it threw out doubts as to the propriety of the course which he was pursuing. He spent the evening on which the conspiracy was to take effect in the king's apartment, saw him read the anonymous letter sent him, and upon the generous and headstrong king's despising the warning, followed him to the ball, and was present when he was shot. Now, take us to the closet of this man, and let us see him writing the letter which was fitted to save his sovereign—show us this, and no more, and we say, How becoming! how generous! but let us follow him through the whole scenes, and we change our tone, and arraign him of treachery; and we do so at the very instant when he writes the letter, and seems most magnanimous.

By the help of these principles, we are enabled to bring home the sense of guilt to every man's conscience; not only the sense of individual sins, but of constant and abiding sinfulness. When there is not a sin of commission, there is a sin of omission; when there is not the sin of excess, there is the sin of defect.

In particular, we hold that every human soul is chargeable with ungodliness. Other sins are committed by individual men, some are addicted to one class of sins, and others to another; but this offence seems to be universal. All are not malevolent or selfish; all are not intemperate or deceitful; all are not proud and ambitious; but all seem to be ungodly. Other sins may be only occasional, but this seems to be perpetual and abiding, and renders all men guilty at all times, even when they are cherishing thoughts and feelings which in themselves are praiseworthy. Does any man stand up and say, I was in a virtuous state at such and such a time, when I was defending the helpless, and relieving the destitute? We admit at once that these actions in themselves are becoming, as becoming as those of the disobedient son showing kindness to his companions; of the unjust man practising hospitality; of the slaveholder supplying his slaves with excellent food; of the husband providing handsomely for a wife abandoned; or of the conspirator sending a notice fitted to frustrate the conspiracy to which he was a party. If we could judge these acts apart from the agent, we should unhesitatingly approve of them. Nay, we do approve of the abstract acts, but we never for one instant approve of the agent. Before we can approve of the disobedient son, but kind companion, he must return to his obedience; of the unjust philanthropist, he must restore the fruits of his iniquity; of the liberal slaveholder, he must undo his deed; of the unfaithful husband in his kindness, he must return to the society of his wife; of the notice sent by the conspirator, he must first disconnect himself entirely and openly from the conspiracy;—and, in like manner, before we can approve thoroughly of man, even in his generosity, we must find him returning to his allegiance to God, making confession of his past sin, humbling himself before him whom he has offended, and acknowledging that the very gifts which he is about to bestow come from God, the author of all his blessings.

As godliness is a constant duty, so ungodliness, habitually cherished, is a great master-sin, reaching over the whole man, contaminating the service he pays, however proper it may be in itself. Does it not look as if an ungodly man could not do a truly virtuous act? Does it not look as if man must first be made godly, before he can do an act truly good? "Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt."

SECT. IV.—FARTHER INQUIRY INTO THE VIRTUOUSNESS, AND MORE PARTICULARLY THE GODLINESS, OF MAN'S CHARACTER.

It is extremely difficult for us, in our present circumstances, and with our present prejudices, to form an impartial estimate of the human character. Prejudices intervene to obscure the view, both when we examine others and ourselves. On looking around, we find ourselves in the heart of a crowd of persons and events, so involved one with another, and with us, that we cannot easily form an enlarged conception of them. What a mass of beings spring up before us, when we would survey the world! and these with feelings, with habits, and dispositions so varied; some mild, others passionate; some gifted with lofty powers of understanding, others incapable of rising above the ordinary details of life; some who seem to be looking forward to another world, and others living as if they were to live here for ever, or as if their souls were to go down with their bodies to the grave, and be buried in the same tomb. We are, moreover, personally connected with many of the events that are occurring; some we look to with hope, as about to bring us friends or fortune; others with fear, as threatening to plunge us into the depths of adversity. Then there are a thousand ties connecting us with the men around us; to this one we are joined by the bond of relationship; to this other, by the ties of business; and with a third, we have passed many a pleasant and profitable hour. Being so intimately connected with all around us, and all around us being so involved, we are constantly liable, in our judgments of character, to be warped by human prepossessions, or at least to become bewildered and confused.

The better way of forming a true estimate of the moral character of man is to examine ourselves. But then we are afraid to inspect ourselves, lest humbling disclosures should be made. And when we have the courage to examine our hearts, prejudice dims the eyes, vanity distorts the object seen, the treacherous memory brings up only the fair and flattering side of the picture, and the deceived judgment denies the sinful action, explains away the motives, or excuses the deed in the circumstances.

It appears, then, that we are too near the object examined to obtain an expanded view, and too personally connected with it to form an impartial estimate. We are in the condition of one surveying a bustling scene while in the midst of it; of a soldier, for example, trying to form a conception of the battle while engaged in the fight. Those who would obtain a correct view of the scene or battle, must ascend an eminence whence they may see it lying before and below them:—and is it not possible to reach a height whence we may survey human nature far above the passions and narrow interests which do here so confine and distract us? Let us in imagination ascend to such an eminence,—higher than that mount, wrapt in clouds and thunders, from which Moses received the law revealed to men who had broken it, or than that other mount whence he descried the land of promise smiling with fertility, or even than that mount from which the Tempter shewed the Representative of man the glory of the kingdoms of this world; we are to rise above these distracting or delusive scenes to those third heavens to which an Apostle was carried, whether in the body or out of the body he knew not, that there we may see all things as God sees them, when he looks down from heaven upon the children of men. As we leave the earth in this flight of faith, we are gradually removed from the sympathies, the prejudices of the race, one after another of the network which ties us to the earth is broken or loosened, till at length we are altogether disentangled from lower interests, and we find that, as we ascend, our view widens with the wide horizon spreading out around us; that terrestrial objects dwindle into greater and greater insignificance—the property once coveted so earnestly shrinking till it is scarcely discernible, and the very citadels of earth, its proud palaces and populous cities, and these isles in which we live, with their vaunted trade and arts and commerce, and ships which visit every shore of the ocean, diminishing till they appear "a very little thing;" and that as we draw near to Him who dwelleth in light, the brightest earthly glory is stript of its lustre and appears dim, just as every other object appears dark after we have gazed on the splendour of the noon-day sun. Being dazzled with the light, we turn for relief to the earth now far beneath us. We venture to affirm that from this point of view our judgment would be the same with that of God—"God looked down from heaven upon the children of men to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God. Every one of them is gone back, they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one."

From such a point of view we shall be satisfied that all men are on much the same level. We divide mankind into the virtuous and the vicious, the good and the bad. And it is certain that there are differences between one man and another, and between one class of men and another, in respect of their moral condition. Still, if we take a sufficiently high standard, we shall see that, though there are differences, there are far more important points of resemblance. When we ascend a very high mountain, and take a view of the ground lying below us, we find the lower hills, which may have appeared of considerable magnitude when looked at from beneath, becoming more and more insignificant, till at length the whole landscape of little hills and valleys stretches out before us as a level plain; and did we but look upon mankind and human nature from the height of God's law, we should be less impressed with the difference between this man and that man, and see more clearly how much they are, after all, on the same level. "There is no difference, for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

Man's favourable estimate of his character arises from his looking at himself from a wrong position—from his taking a low and imperfect standard. In order to judge correctly, we are, from the stand-point reached, to take the law of God as the instrument of judgment. Having in the last section taken a survey of man's moral nature, as the same can be gathered from the intimations of conscience, we are now to use not the faculty that judges so much as the law by which it judges; and taking with us proper views of the nature of virtue, and of the qualities that constitute it, we are to inquire into the character and extent of the good or evil qualities which man possesses.

In doing so, it is needful to remember, that virtue consists essentially in the will following the dictates of the law fixed for its regulation; and that sin, on the other hand, consists in the mind refusing to follow the rule prescribed to it. Proceeding on these principles, it will at once appear that the morally good does not consist in the possession of feeling or affection. Love is not the only element in the good. There may be positive vice in misdirected love. The circumstance that man possesses affection is no proof of the purity of his nature. We hold it capable, indeed, of being demonstrated by the strongest evidence that man is possessed of disinterested affection. There are sympathies, and tendernesses, constantly shown by mankind towards each other. If there be a person who has never received such kindness from a fellow-creature, it is most assuredly because, by his rudeness or selfishness, he has repelled it. But we maintain that the mere possession, or the lavishing of these affections, does not constitute the race morally good. Some of the most vicious among mankind have been distinguished for their great sensibility—a sensibility abused by them, however, and so the means of spreading a wider evil, just as when corruption begins in vegetable life, its progress becomes the more rapid and the more fatal in proportion to the richness of the vegetation.

Besides benevolence, there is needed, in order to virtuous character, a regulating power of justice. Two things are needful to the beauty and beneficence of that star which shines in the expanse. There is its light, and there is the regularity of its movement in its allotted course. Conceive this star, while retaining the former of these qualities, to lose the latter—it might, in its now wayward career through the heavens, carry along with it dismay and trouble to every world which it approached, and that just because its fire was still unextinguished. There is still, we acknowledge, light flashing from man's character as from a star, but it is as from a wandering star, whose progress we view with anxiety and alarm.

Man's sinfulness, in so far as affection is concerned, consists, first, in ill-regulated love, and secondly, in defect of love, using love in its highest acceptation as denoting something more than mere sensibility, as implying wish and desire. The former of these we hold to be the first in the order of nature and of succession. There is first some wish, or purpose, contrary to the fixed law; and then there comes to be a drying up of love altogether in regard to some of its exercises. To use once more our illustration, the star first wanders from its path, and gives, in consequence, its light and heat to objects different from those which its beams were meant to irradiate, and then losing, as it wanders further off, its light and heat altogether, it departs into the blackness of darkness for ever.

(1.) The circumstance has often been observed and dwelt on by divines, that UNGODLINESS is the universal sin of humanity. It has not been noticed so frequently how it should have come to be so. The train of observation we have been pursuing conducts, if we do not mistake, to an adequate explanation. There are obvious reasons why a sinful creature should not relish a nearness of approach to, or even so much as to meditate upon, a God whom he has so grievously offended. It is not difficult to see how from this cause, of the three elements which meet in the morally good, namely, the well-wishing, the respect to law, and the respect to God, it should be the last, or the respect to God, which is first dissevered from the others, and ungodliness should come to be the leading exhibition of human sinfulness, and the distinguishing characteristic of all fallen creatures.

Alcibiades thus expresses his feelings in reference to Socrates: —" I stop my ears, therefore, as from the syrens, and flee away as fast as possible, that I may not sit down beside him, and grow old in listening to his talk; for this man has reduced me to feel the sentiment of blame, which I imagine no one could readily believe was in me; he alone inspires me with remorse and awe, for I feel in his presence my incapacity of refuting what he says, or of refusing to do that which he directs; but when I depart from him, the glory which the multitude confers overwhelms me. I escape, therefore, and hide myself from him ; and when I see him, I am overwhelmed with humiliation, because I have neglected to do what I have confessed ought to be done, and often have I wished that he were no longer to be seen among men." If such an effect was produced—if such were the wishes excited by near contact with the excellence of Socrates—how much more overwhelming must be the idea of the unspotted purity of God to a man conscious of guilt ? Hence the inclination of mankind, owing to the "humiliation" with which his presence overwhelms them, "not to sit beside God," but rather to "flee from him as fast as possible," "to hide themselves from him ;" nay, at times to wish that there was no God, or no such God, to take a holy cognizance of their conduct.

Multitudes, we are aware, are so far ignorant of the existence of this enmity, that they have not so much as confessed it to themselves. And it is to be acknowledged, that there are persons in whom it is to some extent dormant ; or in whom, at least, it is not at all times called forth and excited in an active and positive manner. But even when there is not the bursting flame, there may be the smouldering embers. The following illustration may help us to understand this. It is conceivable that a person may entertain a repugnance to us in the depths of his heart, and yet this feeling not be in constant activity. As long as we are at a distance from him, and as there is nothing to recall the recollection of our persons or actions to his mind, he may, in the busy pursuit of his usual avocations, forget us for a time, during which his enmity would so far be in a slumbering state. But when we come into his presence, and whenever we happen to do anything, it may be most unwittingly, fitted to humble his pride, or ruffle him in his ruling passion, then the enmity will boil, and rage, and break forth with greater or less violence, according to the temperament of the individual. Of this description is the enmity of man's heart towards God. Its most common manifestation is an habitual or studious forgetfulness. As much as within him lies, he contrives to keep away the very thought of God from his mind, because it is a thought that troubles him. There is nothing in the contemplation to flatter his vanity—there is much to check and reprove him ; and he prefers to engross himself with the business of life, or the pleasures of the world. When Palamedes came to Ithaca, to invite Ulysses to join in the expedition against Troy, the latter, unwilling to engage in the undertaking, betook himself to ploughing the sand and sowing salt, on the pretence of being visited with insanity. There are multitudes as sane as Ulysses, who betake themselves to works as insane, and all in the way of pretence, to excuse themselves from the performance of the immediate duties which they owe to God.

Sometimes, no doubt, notwithstanding his general unwillingness, man is all but compelled to think of God, by the circumstances in which he is placed; but when the thought comes into his mind, he banishes it with all practicable haste, as the Gadarenes besought Jesus to depart from their coasts, when they found that, in consequence of his visit, a portion of their property, kept by them contrary to the law of Moses, which they professed to reverence, had been destroyed. Under some impulse of feeling, in the hour of deep grief and disappointment, and in the apprehension of overhanging judgments, he betakes himself to God, and calls up the remembrance of his name from the oblivion to which it had been consigned; but as He stands before him in awful majesty, he is as awe-struck as were Saul and the witch of Endor, when Samuel actually appeared to them. In some other cases he may cling to the thought still more fondly and for a greater length of time, as eagerly indeed as the Philistines seized the ark of God, and carried it into the temple of Dagon; but he soon loses his desire for so near an approach to God, when he finds it inconsistent with the desires of his corrupted heart, just as the Philistines banished the ark when it threw down their idols and afflicted their cities. The great majority of mankind come at last to learn the art, too easily learned by depraved man—that of living without God in the world. "God is not in all their thoughts."

True, when men succeed in obtaining a false view of God, when they are enabled to look upon him as one who can overlook their failings, and cherish and countenance them in their sins, they will think of him more frequently, and pay him a willing homage. It is thus that we account for the inclination to polytheism and idolatry in the earlier ages of the world, and the simpler stages of society; and it is thus, too, that we explain the tendency among more cultivated nations, and in the present day, to divest God of his holiness, or to sink the idea of his law and government. We regard these prevailing inclinations as a proof of the deeply seated carnal enmity of the heart towards God —that is, towards a holy God—that is, towards the existing God. But so far as mankind entertain speculatively correct views of the Divine character, their antipathy shews itself in an habitual forgetfulness. And the question arises, How does it happen that they feel no delight in contemplating that God who calls forth the constant admiration and praise of all holy beings throughout the universe? Plainly, because of some deeply seated ungodliness which keeps them from seeing the loveliness which all others admire.

Then there are times when this enmity appears in a more open and offensive form. Whenever God is forced upon the attention, his claims asserted, and the unsettled accounts between him and the sinner fully written out and presented, then the dormant antipathy is called into action—the seemingly dead snake is warmed into vitality, and is ready to inflict its sting. The spirit now feels the enmity, possibly expresses it, perhaps acts upon it. The very thought of God is positively painful, as painful as the presence of the man's worst enemy. Not unfrequently the bitterness of the heart will vent itself in blasphemy; rendering it needful, that wherever a holy religion is proclaimed, it should contain a prohibition against taking God's name in vain. Not unfrequently it will manifest itself in prompting mankind to mar all that may be thought dear to God, to oppose all that may claim to have his sanction, and deface all that bears his name and image. The fires of persecution are now lighted, being kindled at that fire which is burning within the bosom, but which, as it cannot reach God, is directed against all that may be supposed to represent him or possess his authority.

We are apt to wonder at the excessive wickedness of the ancient Jews at certain eras in their history, and their tendency to idolatry in the midst of the light which they enjoyed. Possibly, we may find an explanation in the very number and nature of the privileges possessed by them. They may have felt that God was too near them—that the light was too oppressive; and hence their disposition to retreat to darkened groves, in which a false worship transacted its rites. We suspect, in particular, that it was the very propinquity and purity of the holiness of Jesus which so irritated the spirit of his persecutors. We may account, on the same principle, for the circumstance, not unfrequently occurring, of the son of pious parents, educated in a religious home, hating all that is spiritual with a malignity above that of other men ; if not disposed to yield to it, he will loathe it all the more from the contests which he has had with it. Hence, also, the opposition to spiritual truth on the part of some on whom it has been earnestly pressed. Those who have long resisted it will come positively to nauseate it, as the wicked do a faithful monitor who speaks plainly of their faults. "I hate him, for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil."

We need not dwell upon the greatness and enormity of such a sin as that now referred to. Not only is it a great sin in itself, it is an abiding malady, polluting the whole man, and the whole man at all times, rendering his very heart and character ungodly. Now, as long as this ungodliness is in his bosom, whether in a slumbering or more active state, whether merely burning within or bursting out, we cannot say of man that he is truly good. And let us observe in this ungodliness the manifestation of these two elements, and in the order now named—first, a rebellion against a law, and secondly, a drying up of the affection.

(2.) This ungodliness is the sin with which we charge all men, and there are OTHER SINS of which individuals are guilty. These vary much in the case of different persons. In all we may observe the first of the elements now referred to, the breaking of a law, and in most of them a defect of love or benevolence. First the affection bursts forth from its channel, and then it is dried up altogether in the sandy desert over which it flows.

Such is the general truth which we regard as conclusively forced upon the inquirer by a survey of the qualities of man's moral nature. The doctrine that man is depraved seems to be established, but with *several important limitations.*

First, mankind have still much gentleness, much amiability, and other qualities implying a heart susceptible of love. It is only the more to be regretted that this love should not be directed towards God. Even as regards man, it is commonly perverted and misdirected, and is apt to be destroyed by a growing malignity, or dried up by a confirmed selfishness and indifference ; but in the breasts of many it dwells as in a fountain, and is ever ready to flow out.

Secondly, every particular kind of sin is not practised by every man, or natural to every man. There is, we have seen, at least one form of sin which is common to all, but there are other kinds which are peculiar to some men—one person being inclined to pride, another addicted to intemperance, and a third distinguished by his selfish attention to his own interests and comforts.

Every man is liable to sin, just as every man is liable to disease and death. But in how many different ways may death come, and by the instrumentality of what a vast number of diseases ! Sometimes it comes upon mankind insensibly, by the slow progress of consumption ; at other times it dries up the strength by the heat of fever ; or it lays its victim prostrate at once by the stroke of paralysis. Now, just as the death which reigns over all comes in a variety of ways, so the sin which also rules over all presents itself in a great diversity of forms ; and we might as well seek to number the diseases to which our frame is incident, as the divers lusts which mankind serve.

Yet it is most assuredly a very fallacious mode of reasoning which would lead us to look on mankind as not depraved, merely because they are not addicted to every possible sin. We suspect, however, that there are some who have no other ground for regarding themselves as morally right except the absence of certain vices. Thus the miser congratulates himself on his not having run in debt by extravagance, while the thoughtless spendthrift rejoices that he is not so narrow-minded and contracted in his dispositions and aims as the miser. The drunkard boasts that he is not dishonest, and the cunning, deceitful man tells you, with an air of triumph, that he is not intemperate. The man of dull temperament—whose soul resembles a day of mists, without torrents of rain, indeed, but perpetually cold—not absolutely dark, but disclosing none of the distant landscapes on which the eye of faith delights to repose—never brightened by the sunshine of hope, or warmed by the ardour of fervent charity—assumes superiority, because he keeps free from violent excitement, and extricates himself from difficulties into which others, by their impetuosity, contrive to plunge. Thus every man would infer, from the absence of some one sin, the presence of a positive virtue.

In speaking of man's wickedness, it is to be taken into account, *as a third limitation, that he is not so corrupt that he cannot become worse.* Mankind are commonly not so depraved in their younger years as in after-life, when their vicious propensities have had time to expand. Man's natural depravity is more like the seed than the tree—it may be compared to the fountain rather than the stream.

But let no man congratulate himself upon the circumstance that he is not so wicked as he might possibly be. Man's liability to fall farther—his capacity for wickedness—is one of his most fearful characteristics. The depravity is often lurking within, when it has not yet appeared without; there exists the spark, which needs only to be fanned by the winds of temptation to break forth into a flame. Every one has not felt the more sinful passions in their greatest height and vehemence, but he may at least have experienced them in their commencing movements. No one has mingled much with mankind without being thrown into positions, sometimes for a longer and sometimes for a shorter space, in which his utmost exertions were required to keep his spirit from running wild into disorder or violence. On one occasion he may have felt a momentary wish to thwart a rival in business or in fame, who has wounded his vanity or darkened his prospects of success; at another time he may have felt disposed to exact revenge for an offence, real or imaginary; and again, he may have longed to obtain forbidden pleasure, of which he could taste without risk of detection. All of us must have felt these passions, or others equally dangerous, stirring within the bosom; and on such occasions, when the soul is tempest-tossed and stirred, we are permitted to discover depths which might otherwise have lain concealed in their own silent darkness. Such feelings would never spring up in a breast perfectly holy; they are indications of a deeply seated depravity. They are the initiatory or elementary states of those passions which carry men such far lengths in wickedness. They are like the heavy drops which sometimes come before the shower, like the strong gusts which precede the full fury of the coming tempest. They are the first heavings of an ocean, which may soon be tossed by the continuance of the same influence to its lowest profundities. Only allow them to increase—only encourage them by indulgence—only add fuel to the fire—and they will soon break forth with unappeasable fury, while the astonished reason has to stand by in utter impotence.

It is a most alarming consideration that man's character is seldom stationary—it is like the vessel on the wide ocean with wind and tide against it—and if he is not struggling against the passions, they will hurry him into yet greater extremes of wickedness. What melancholy proofs do we see in the world around us! You wonder at the drunkard become so infatuated; but the grieving, the downcast mother, or the disheartened wife, can tell you of a time—and a sigh heaves her bosom as she speaks of it—when the now outcast and degraded one was loved and respected, and returned with regularity to quiet and domestic peace in the bosom of the family. But, alas! he would not believe the warnings of a parent, he did not attend to the meek unobtrusive recommendations of a wife or sister, he despised the commands of the living God; and seeking for happiness where it has never been found, he spurned at those who told him that the habit was fixing its roots;—till now he has become the scorn and jest of the thoughtless, and the object of pity to the wise and good; boasting to his companions, in the midst of his brutal mirth, of his strength of mind, and yet unable to resist the least temptation; talking of his kindness of heart, while his friends and family are pining in poverty, or weeping over his waywardness. It is only one of many indications that might be adduced of the tendency of sin to propagate itself, and spread throughout the soul in ever-widening circles.

SECT. V.—THEORY OF THE PRODUCTION OF THE EXISTING MORAL STATE OF MAN.

We have been viewing some of the characteristics of man's nature, and the following explanation seems as if it might account historically for the leading phenomena.

We put the case of a being constituted in all other respects as a man is, with his high faculties, his lovely affections, and amiable feelings; but in whom the moral law is wont to exercise its becoming office, and whose heart is filled with love to the Creator and the creature. This being, yielding to tempting suggestions made to him, is led to commit a deed that is openly sinful. The act must speedily pass under the review of the conscience, and the conscience pronounces an instant condemnation. What is to be done under this sense of sin? Let the person, some one may answer, cherish repentance, and seek forgiveness from God. Now, repentance is undoubtedly the duty, and the instant duty, of a being so situated. But then, this repentance cannot make atonement for the previous neglect of duty. Conscience undoubtedly approves of the penitence as required in the circumstances, but it is beyond the province of conscience to say that thereby amends is made for the evil done; nay, the conscience continues to condemn the deed even after repentance, and points to a punishment to follow. Even on the supposition that repentance succeeded, and that there was never another sin committed, still the mind would look back to the transgression as a fearfully dark event, suggesting terrible forebodings.

But it is just as conceivable that the conduct may be different. It may be doubted whether genuine repentance in the circumstances is within the native power of the human mind. A moral and responsible being departing from the course of rectitude cannot return to it, any more than a planet wandering from, can come back to its path. It seems, at least, to be as probable that the individual referred to refuses to repent, or rather puts aside repentance. His mind will now be in a singularly perplexed and distressing state. Following the natural train of mental association, according to which everything that excites the mind returns repeatedly before it, the transgression will often present itself; and as often as the memory recalls it, the conscience will condemn the deed, and hurry the thoughts onward to impending judgments. These recollections and anticipations will be accompanied by a train of troubled feelings, crowding on one another like the waves of an ocean agitated by opposing winds and currents.

But is there no way by which the recollections of the sin may be banished from the mind? As there are laws of association which recall the sinful deed, there are other principles in the mind which prompt it to turn away from the thought and contemplation of that which brings only pain. A contest has now begun in a mind which was before at rest, and to all appearance it is a contest which, if there be no interposition on the part of God, must rage for ever. There are laws of association good in themselves, which will tend to recall the deed just because it has excited the mind; and the deed recalled calls forth a condemnation by the conscience, followed by painful emotions; and speedily as they rise, there will be an attempt to drive them away just because they are distracting. The aversion to the contemplation of an unpleasant event will lead the individual to mingle in such scenes, that the objects presented to the eye may carry away the mind to other topics; or he will endeavour so to change the train of association, that more pleasing thoughts may rise up before the mind. The attempts made to expel the evil serve only to exasperate it. The studious endeavours to bury the sin in oblivion will just turn it up the more frequently to have a new and farther sentence pronounced upon it by the conscience, and the sentence will be followed up by those avenging feelings which wait upon the conscience as the officers of its court of justice.

The struggle is now thickened, and other parties are involved in its fearful and all-absorbing eddies and whirlpools. When the governing power of the soul has lost its authority, the appetites and affections of the mind will follow each its own impulse; and all will become unsettled and disordered, as in a country where there is no government, and every man does that which is right in his own eyes. Every lust and appetite now seeks its gratification, and acknowledges no authority to control it. The love of happiness, good in itself, and when properly guided, now becomes a blind chase after pleasure of every kind. The sensibility is dried up when it ought to flow, and forthwith comes "like a wide rushing in of waters," when it should be restrained. The benevolent affections refuse to embrace certain objects to which they ought to be directed, and flow out towards others in the streams of a doting and capricious love. The intellectual faculties, before employed in seeking after truth and in devising good, are now exercised in contriving means of banishing the recollection of sin, and gratifying the unrestrained feelings. And there is another element which now comes into play. Since sin has been committed, and condemnation pronounced, it is thought that a few more offences may not much aggravate the guilt, or place the sinner in a much worse condition; and sins come to be knowingly and wilfully committed. The malignant passions now come out as beasts of prey do in the night, and the filthy lusts creep out as insects crawl forth in the damp and moisture.

Such, we might predict, according to the principles of the human mind, would be the general issue to which the commission of sin would conduct a being so situated. The particular results cannot be anticipated by human sagacity. We could confidently predict, that evil effects must follow, were a steam-locomotive to pass off the rails, or a stream to burst its banks, or the ocean to break down the barriers against which it beats, though we might not be able to tell the particular direction or channel which the rebellious agent might take. We can, in like manner, foresee evils that must follow from the commission of sin on the part of a moral agent, though we may not be able to define the precise turn which they would take; nay, this turn would evidently depend on the peculiar character of the individual, on the circumstances in which he happened to be placed, and the nature of the sin which he first committed.

A stream bursting from its course will for a time spread tumultuously in all directions, carrying devastation wherever it goes; but it will at last form a new channel for itself. In much the same way, the fallen being we are contemplating, after turning hither and thither for a time, would soon acquire certain confirmed practices and habits, determined partly by his situation, and partly by the peculiarities of his native dispositions. If he is near to God, it is conceivable that he may speedily be exasperated into open rebellion; and if driven to a distance from God, he may rather seek to abandon himself to sulkiness, and forgetfulness of God, and of all that is good. If consigned immediately to punishment, there will result a confirmed obstinacy and hatred of God; and provided a period of respite and comparative freedom be allowed, there will rather—as in the case of Cain—be a swelling pride, and an aspiring ambition, prompting to new and daring enterprises. The employments and habits of the parties would also be determined by their native propensities, now abused and perverted, and flowing out, each in its own channel, all unrestrained by higher principle. Our epic poet seems to be as philosophically correct as he is poetically picturesque, in the view which he gives of the fallen angels, when he represents them as differing from each other in their characters, and each under his own predominating lust and passion.

It must be left to every man's consciousness to determine how far the delineation given bears any general resemblance to his own felt experience. We say, general resemblance; for it will at once occur to every one that there is a difference, and that not of an unimportant kind, between the hypothetical and real case; and we refer to this as sufficient to explain the discrepancy between the picture which has been drawn and the actual state of man. In the supposed case, the individual remembers a time when he was without sin; whereas the memory of man cannot go back to a time when he was not transgressing the commandments of God. This difference in the cause must produce a difference in the effect, and that of an influential character. The conscience of sin cannot be so acute when the mind never knew what it was to be unspotted, as it must necessarily be when it can look back on a time when it was untainted by sin in thought or feeling. Hence the deadness of the conscience on the part of mankind in general, so different from the keen sensibility of those angelic beings who have fallen from purity. We may now discover one reason why man in his present state is prevented from reaching that demoniacal madness and fury which agitate all those who have an acute sense of the sin in which they still indulge. Whether, after the day of judgment, man may not be driven to the same extreme, is a question which will fall to be considered in a future section. We refer to this difference between fallen angels and fallen men, in order to explain how the latter may live in a state of insensibility in regard to their sin. This same circumstance, as accounting for the deadness of the human conscience, also explains the confirmed nature of the sinful affections which mankind cherish, and the courses of conduct pursued by them. Springing up with them from their youth, their sinful affections and habits are entwined with every part of their nature, and have become, as it were, essential parts of themselves. These two tendencies, originating in the circumstance that sin is natural to mankind, act and react upon, and strengthen each other. Sin is scarcely noticed, because it has all along been committed; and because it is not observed, it continues to grow and strengthen without check and restraint. This twofold action must continue till such time as the whole position of the man is changed by events in this world or the next, bringing his guilt before his mind in all its hideousness and enormity, and setting him upon a new and different career, more nearly allied to that of the fallen angelic host.

But taking this most important difference into account, it is worthy of being inquired, whether the hypothetical case does not in some measure enable us to understand the mystery of man's nature and character.* In particular, there are three classes of phenomena, which we are enabled to explain, and these among the most curious in the human mind.

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* We wish it to be understood, that we do not profess in this treatise to clear up what should ever be regarded as the profoundest of mysteries, the origin of evil, and original sin. In these sections it is proposed simply to give an account of certain phenomena connected with sin in man's heart; and in other passages in which the topic is alluded to, it is meant merely to shew how man's freedom throws the blame of his guilt upon himself, and not at all to explain how God should have allowed sin to appear in the universe. The origin of evil, like every other beginning, shrouds itself in darkness. The various theories on this subject, as well as on the nature of sin, are discussed with great ability in Muller's Christian Doctrine of Sin. Leibnitz' doctrine of Optimism is the most sublime attempt ever made to solve the mystery, but it cannot be so stated as not to involve this mystery, that God should select a system in which evil is allowed that good may come. Some would clear up this mystery, and every other, by representing sin as mere privation; but we never can be made to believe that deceit, malignity, adultery, are mere negations; they are as positive acts as integrity, benevolence, chastity. A similar objection lies against the doctrine which places it in creature imperfection. All those theories which proceed on the idea that evil is needful in order to call forth and confirm the good, are founded on inadequate views of the evil of sin, and overlook the fact that the evil quite as often seduces the good, as the good overcomes the evil. The theory of the sensational overcoming the moral and spiritual, does not embody a full statement of the facts; for there may be sin, such as unbelief and pride, where there is no sensualism, and it fails to shew how man should have been so constituted as that sensualism should prevail. The view that all sin originates in selfishness is not true to our nature, for there may be sin where there is no formal or calculating selfishness; and if by selfishness is meant merely the rebellion of an inferior impulse, we have merely the statement of the fact, but no explanation. All that man can know—and this he does know—with certainty is, that sin is as much a reality as moral good, and that the one is made known to us by the same moral power as the other. As to original sin, it should ever be treated as a fact established, but shrouded in mystery. Its existence can be argued very immediately from the facts of moral experience. All inquiries into actual sin conduct us to an original sin. The circumstance that all persons sin as soon as they come to act for themselves, is a clear proof of the existence of a sinful nature. Man's state by nature is much the same as that of one who had produced a sinful state of will by previous sinful acts. This prepares us to believe, on the authority of the Word of God, in a relation of our sinful nature to the common father of the race—which farther fact, however, is not fitted to remove the mystery. All such inquiries, too, conduct us to a slavery of the will—a fact which cannot be inconsistent with its essential freedom. The doctrines of the Old Light school of theologians on these subjects seem to us substantially correct, though they have at times set forth dogmatic statements which go beyond the letter of the Word—and on such a subject human logic may err the moment it passes beyond the simple

First, we see how, on such a hypothesis, there is room for the exercise of all the faculties of man's nature, and also for an exhibition of the individual character of individual men, and for a variety of character on the part of mankind generally. In the fall of man, much the same effects have followed as we read of being produced by earthquakes, which have turned rectilineal alleys into crooked ones, changed the courses of rivers, and thrown one man's property upon another ; or as have been produced in those metamorphic geological rocks which have changed their structure without changing their elements. There has been a similar twisting of the human character in the fall, without, however, the constitution of man's nature being annihilated. Its faculties do not work as before ; but still they work, though in a new way, as we see all the vital functions of those who have been deformed from the womb playing in them as in persons of full form and stature. The man of high ability will be a man of high ability still ; the man of deep sensibility will still have a fountain of emotion ready to flow out. There may still be shrewd observation, lofty speculation, consecutive argument, fine fancy, bold imagination, tender sensibility, and elevated sentiment. Without any godliness, and with a mind utterly perverted, there may be ingenuity, like that of Hume—acuteness, like that of Voltaire—a noble independence of sentiment, like that of Burns—a sensibility as tender as that of Rousseau—a reach of fancy like that of Shelley—or a power of anatomizing the human heart, as profound as that of Byron.

Secondly, we see how there may be many amiable and even noble and generous qualities in man's fallen nature. Just as the disordered machine may perform many graceful evolutions, shewing what it could do if properly regulated ; just as the maniac may sometimes reason correctly, or even exhibit brilliant intellectual feats : so a disordered moral nature is not incom-

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explication (analytic not synthetic) of Scripture language. Of this we are certain, that the New Light school have not, by all their theories, let in a single ray of light on the darkness. But we must not allow ourselves to enter too far into a topic which cannot be treated fully without entering upon Biblical Theology. We have gone so far in order to shew, that in Ethics, as in a thousand questions in Physics, we must often rest satisfied with knowing the fact without knowing its origin, ground, or explanation.

patible with the exercise of a hundred pleasing accomplishments, and the working of not a few disinterested and benevolent affections.

The theory now developed also serves to explain a third very important class of phenomena, which we would now proceed to consider, being the workings of conscience in the soul of fallen man.

SECT. VI.—STATE OF THE CONSCIENCE IN THE DEPRAVED NATURE.

It is very difficult to determine, in a precise and philosophical manner, wherein the conscience in man's existing nature differs, in respect of place and authority, from the conscience in those beings in whom it subordinates every other faculty and feeling. There is little difficulty, indeed, in proving that man's moral nature is in a state of derangement, and that the moral faculty has not the power which it ought to possess. It is as easy to demonstrate that there is disorder in man's moral state as to shew that there is derangement in the intellect of the lunatic. In some cases we could bring proof of the madman's insanity sufficient to convince for the time the intellect of the madman himself. We can in every case make the conscience decide that man's moral nature is disorganized. We can constrain every man to condemn himself, just as the people of England made the most infamous of their judges (Jeffreys) write a warrant for his own apprehension. But it becomes a much more difficult task to shew wherein this disorder precisely consists, as difficult as to determine wherein intellectual derangement lies —a question which has hitherto baffled the most sagacious observers.

It is a common way of accounting for the anomalies in man's moral state to say, in a loose and general way, that the conscience has lost its control over the other faculties of the human mind. Now, it is quite true that the conscience has lost its proper control, but it has not lost all power. On the contrary, it is in some respects as active and energetic as ever. It works not the less powerfully because it works destructively. A court of justice perverted into a court of injustice may be as active in its latter as in its former capacity. The Court of Inquisition in

Spain, the Star-Chamber and the Court of High Commission in the reign of the Stuarts in our own country, and the Tribunals in Paris in the Reign of Terror, were as busily employed, and as potent, as the most righteous courts that ever sat in the same kingdoms. It is not conceivable that the conscience should ever cease to exist in the breast of any responsible agent; certain it is, that in man's present nature it often wields a tremendous energy. Misery never reaches its utmost intensity till it comes to be inflicted by the scourges of an accusing conscience. Wickedness never becomes so unrelenting as when it seems to have received the sanction of moral law. What might otherwise have been a mere impulse of blind passion becomes now persevering and systematic villany or cruelty. Not unfrequently it assumes the shape of cool-blooded persecution, committed without reluctance and without remorse. The conscience now shows what had been its power for good if properly exercised, and how it can bear down and subordinate all the other and mere sympathetic feelings of the mind.

The cruelty inflicted in times of political convulsion furnishes a too apposite illustration. It becomes so great just because it has taken the name of justice, and seems to be the avenger of the trampled rights of men, whether of princes or people. Besides feelings of personal revenge, there has been an idea of supporting the rights of sovereigns, and the cause of social order, in those dreadful injuries which tyrants have inflicted on their subjects who, in fact or appearance, were disposed to rebellion. It was because they were esteemed the enemies of the liberties of the people that so many were hurried to the prison and the guillotine during the frenzy of the French Revolution; and it is certain that some of the most prominent actors in the most atrocious scenes, such as Robespierre, were not naturally cruel. Oppression, whether exercised by the many or the few, has never been intensely severe till it has assumed the name, and professes to assert and avenge the rights, of justice; and it now becomes so unrelenting, just because it does everything in the name of law and conscience. We have heard of the bitterness of legalized tyranny, that is, of tyranny legalized by civil law; but this is nothing to the severity which claims to be consecrated by moral law.

The persecution becomes tenfold more bitter and unrelenting when, instead of the name of justice, it can take to itself the still more sacred name of religion, and the actors imagine that they are promoting higher interests than those of man, and doing service to God. "The apotheosis of error," says Bacon, "is the greatest evil of all." Take the following illustration of the two species of cruelty.

In one of the instructive incidents of the French Revolution, we have the record of a lady of rank, (mother of the Marquis de Custine,) assaulted by an infernal mob as she was descending the stairs of the building in which her father-in-law was being tried. "It is the daughter of the traitor!" (observe how men must first defame those whom they injure,) was the language which, mingled with horrid imprecations, reached her ears. Already some, with naked swords, had placed themselves before her; others, half clothed, had caused their women to draw back—a certain sign that murder was about to be enacted; and she felt that the first symptom of weakness betrayed by her would be the symptom of her death. At this crisis, she observed a fisher-woman among the foremost of the crowd. The woman, who was revolting in appearance, held an infant in her arms. The lady approached her, and said, "What a sweet babe you have!" "Take it," replied the parent, who understood her by one word and glance; "you can return it to me at the foot of the steps." With the child in her arms, the lady descended into the court, unsaluted by even an abusive word.* It is a picture of the scenes of a political convulsion; and we discover in it the working of an unenlightened conscience, and a perverted sense of wrong, making the actors to clothe their victims in imaginary guilt, before treating them as guilty. Mingled with this perverted moral feeling, we discover sympathetic feelings, more particularly in the female bosom; and we observe these feelings gaining over the very conscience at first perverted, and leading the most brutal to act in a becoming manner, when their feelings of compassion are in the right direction.

The massacre of St. Bartholomew exhibits a still darker scene, and one as characteristic of a religious (so-called) as the other is of a political convulsion. A ruthless murderer lays hold of an infant, and while holding it, the babe smiles in his face, and begins to play with his beard; but it is to no purpose, for the

* Introd. of Custine's Emp. of Czar.

dagger is instantly plunged into the child's breast, and the body is cast into the river amidst the jeers of an infuriated populace, who are crying out, "Where is now your God? What is become of all your psalms and prayers now?" The scene that follows is not less characteristic. A crowd of persons have assembled before the gates of the church at Lyons, and are waiting on their knees the return of an ecclesiastical dignitary, who had been paying his devotions in the interior of the building. They are the very persons who had been perpetrating wholesale murders or inciting the murderers; and now they are waiting the absolution and blessing of the cardinal. As he approaches, they bend their heads in lowliest adoration; and he lifts up his hands, and grants them forgiveness and the blessing of heaven. The cries of the murdered are forgotten by the mob as they retire; their minds inhaling the incense of an apparently approving conscience, which seems to point to an approving God.

Such facts as these show that whatever may be the fault of the conscience, it has not lost its power. While man's moral nature is completely disorganized, it has lost none of its essential elements.

The conditions of responsibility seem to be conscience, will, and intelligence—the conscience being the law, the will the agent, and the intelligence the means of announcing the state of the case to the law. The will, as the agent, is the immediate seat of good or evil, and all evil may be traced primarily in it. But the will, if depraved, will soon come to sway the intelligence, and the intelligence gives a false report to the conscience, which utters, in consequence, a false judgment. If this view is correct, then we see that the moral disorder, beginning in the will, lies all along essentially in the will, which corrupts the intelligence, which, again, deceives the conscience. As long as the will is corrupt, the intelligence will be perverted, and the conscience deluded. Give us but a corrected will, and the intelligence will give in faithful reports, and the conscience will become an unerring guide. "And here we may take occasion to observe the misery of man's corrupted nature, wherein those faculties which were originally ordained for mutual assistance, do now exercise a mutual imposture; and as man did join with a fellow-creature to dishonour, and if it had been, possible to deceive his Maker, so in the faculties of man, we may discover a joint conspiracy in the working of their own overthrow and reproach, and a secret joy in one to be deceived by another."*

There are two ways by which the mind, in its voluntary action, contrives to deceive the conscience.

First, It contrives to banish, as much as possible, the remembrance of the sinful acts committed. When men go to sleep, they darken their windows; and when the guilty wish to be undisturbed, they shut out all consideration of the evil they have done. The polluting lusts that were fondled, so long as they could communicate pleasure, are now banished out of sight when they have served their purpose; as the embalmers in ancient Egypt—sent for, in the first instance, with avidity—had to flee as fast as they could after their offensive work was completed. The malignant passions, after being gratified, must keep out of sight, as hired assassins are got rid of after they have done the deed.

Secondly, the mind learns to present the deeds which it wishes to do or to avoid in a false light. Certain features are brought out into prominent relief, and others are as studiously hid from the view. Hence we find multitudes rushing eagerly to what is evil, but carefully keeping the more painful part out of sight, as the priests in Mexico rung the gong to drown the cries of the human victims offered in sacrifice.

From these two, and it may be from other causes, we find the conscience operating in a number of perverted ways in the human breast.

First, there is an unenlightened conscience. The mind makes no inquiry into the objects presented to it; but taking them as they come, the conscience decides upon them as they cast up. Persons under this influence act according to the prevailing views of their age and country, without making any nice inquiry into their accuracy. They follow religiously the superstitions of their country; they practise faithfully the virtues of their family or tribe—be they hospitality, or courage, or whatever else; and they allow themselves to fall into the vices that abound around them—it may be intemperance or revenge—and they scarcely feel any compunctions in consequence. It is the least sinful form which the conscience takes in fallen man. Yet it is not without sin. The mind avoids inquiry, because it does not wish to be disturbed. It is in darkness, because it prefers the darkness to the light. The conscience, in such persons, loses all delicacy of perception and touch; and the possessor does good without doing it as good, and evil without knowing that it is evil.

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* Bishop Reynolds on the Affections.

SECONDLY, THERE IS A PERVERTED CONSCIENCE. This form differs from the other only in degree. It is a farther stage of the same malady. There is now not only ignorance, there is positive mistake. Nor is it difficult, proceeding on the principles above developed, to discover how the conscience should come to pronounce judgments which are positively erroneous. Under the influence of prejudice and passion, the mind views every object only under some one, and that a very partial, aspect. Objects really loved on other grounds come in imagination to be invested with qualities which do not belong to them; and we are led, not only to desire, but to justify ourselves in desiring them. Men will fight for persons and causes altogether unworthy of esteem, because they identify them with something that is good, and they will do so with unflinching fidelity and the deepest devotedness, thinking that they do God service. On the other hand, when they are under the feeling of malice or revenge, all the actions of the obnoxious party will be seen as through broken and coloured crystal. "It would be curious to see how a respectful estimate of a man's character and talents might be changed, in consequence of some personal inattention experienced from him, into deprecating invectives against him or his intellectual performances; and the railer, though actuated solely by petty revenge, account himself all the while the model of equity and sound judgment."* Having succeeded in representing those whom we dislike in jaundiced colours and distorted forms, we feel as if we were not only allowed, but justified, in the opposition offered them. Malignity never becomes deep or bitter, till it has succeeded in calling in the conscience; and men feel as if they did right to be angry. Mankind always misrepresent those whom they hate, as Nero clothed with the skins of wild beasts those on whom he let loose the dogs that tore them to pieces, and covered with pitch those that were consumed by the flames.

In consequence of these aberrations, willing in the first instance, the mind lapses into a hopelessly perverted state, calling good evil, and evil good. A deep but somewhat gloomy thinker, John Foster, says, "It were probably absurd to expect that any mind should itself be able to detect all its own obliquities, after having been so long beguiled, like the mariners in a story which I have read, who followed the direction of their compass, infallibly right, as they could have no doubt, till they arrived at an enemy's port, where they were seized and made slaves. It happened that the wicked captain, in order to betray the ship, had concealed a large loadstone at a little distance on one side of the needle."* The illustration is most apposite of the constant power of a sinful will, like this concealed loadstone, to draw aside the conscience from its proper bearing, and to lead the possessor astray while he thinks he is holding on in the right direction.

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* Foster on a Man's Writing Memoirs of Himself.

We can thus account for the extraordinary perversions of moral feeling by which certain religious sects are characterized. The delusion caused in individuals by their personal idiosyncrasy, or the influence of accidental circumstances, is produced in these sects by a skilfully arranged system, the prime movers in which deceive others by the same means by which they were themselves deceived. In all such cases it may be remarked, that there are two necessary means employed—there is an acknowledged virtue placed on the foreground before the mind, and there is a course of training. By this virtue the moral faculty is gained; and by the training, the mind is taught to look at this virtue, and to the advantages flowing from its exercise, while other and offensive aspects are studiously kept out of view. Thus, in the Society of Jesus there are placed before the mind the duty of serving Christ, the virtue of submission to a superior, and the advantages thence accruing of centralization, and the energy of united action; and then there is a system of discipline, with a studious secrecy, and disclosures according as the parties are able to bear them. In Thuggery, it was proclaimed that the sacrifice of human life is sacred to the Goddess of Destruction, and that the strangled go to Paradise, and none were allowed to witness the horrid rites till the third year of their apprenticeship.

These are the workings of the conscience, in regard to its more direct office of pointing out the path of duty. In its more reflex operation, as judging of the past character of the possessor, it may assume one or other of two forms, as—

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* Foster on a Man's Writing Memoirs of Himself.

THIRDLY, THERE IS AN UNFAITHFUL CONSCIENCE, or a conscience which does not inform man of his sins. It is the most dangerous of all its delusions. It arises from the painful nature of the emotions which the contemplation of sin calls up, and the effort which the mind makes to avoid or deaden the sensation. Hence the unwillingness to look seriously at the evil committed ; hence the attempt to keep it out of sight, and to bury it, if possible, in forgetfulness. There issue from all this a deceitfulness of heart, and a cast of character completely opposed to that which we describe expressively as single-minded. These self-delusions may be observed not only in those who are possessed of superior abilities and great acuteness, but even in clowns and simpletons. Those who have no other talent are often proverbial for the exercise of a kind of cunning which displays itself in hiding their faults from others, and which is derived, we are convinced, from the skill which they have acquired in deluding themselves. Persons who have long practised this habit of self-deception come at last to look upon themselves with the most complacent self-satisfaction. The greatest criminals have been known to pass years of their life without being visited with any very deep or conscious convictions of conscience. If certain persons can thus commit the most heinous crimes without being much troubled with the consciousness of sin, it is worthy of being inquired whether it is not in consequence of a general property of man's nature operating in the breasts of all, and leading them to conceal their sins from themselves. Does it not seem as if, through this human characteristic, all mankind might be sinners, and lying under the displeasure of God, while yet utterly unconscious of their awful and perilous state ?

The great body of mankind, in ordinary circumstances, are wonderfully little troubled with reproaches of conscience—as little, we believe, as the Jesuit is in practising deceit, and the Thug in perpetrating his murders, and for a like reason—the conscience has been so muffled that no warning sound can come from it. Some have gone down to yet greater depths, far beneath the reach of any disturbing sound—like those depths of the ocean which are beneath all agitation, but in which there is no life—like those coal-pits into which it is impossible to draw the air, and in which all life must perish.

FOURTHLY, THERE IS A TROUBLED CONSCIENCE. Southey, in one of his poems, tells us of a bell—which had been suspended on a rock, that the sound given as the waves beat upon it might warn the mariner of the propinquity to danger—having had its rope cut by pirates, because of the warning which it uttered. It so happened, however, that at a future period these very pirates struck upon that rock which they had stript of its means of admonishing them. Which things may be unto us for an allegory. Mankind take pains to stifle the voice that would admonish them, and they partially succeed, but it is only to find themselves sinking at last in misery thereby more fearfully augmented.

There are violent and convulsive movements of self-reproach which will at times break in upon the self-satisfaction of the most complacent. Man's peace is in this respect like the sultry heat of a summer's day ; it is close and disagreeable at the time, and ever liable to be broken in upon by the thunders and tempests of the Divine indignation. Even in the case of those who are anxious to keep their attention turned away as much as possible from themselves, and as little as possible upon the state of their hearts, there will occur intervals unfilled up between the scenes that engross them, and on these occasions there will be recollections called up which occasion the keenest misery. It may be after a day of selfish business, or an evening of sinful excitement, that such unwelcome visitations are paid to them to disturb their rest, while others have buried their cares in the forgetfulness of sleep. Or it may be, in the time of disease, or in the prospect of death, that the ghosts of deeds committed long ago spring up as from the grave. These gloomy fears proceeding from conscious guilt always rise up like a ghostly apparition, never in the sunshine of prosperity, but always in the gloom of adversity, to render the darkness more horrific. The wicked are thus, in the time of prosperity, heaping up accumulated sorrow, to aggravate the scenes of misery through which they must at last pass. They are vainly attempting to stop the current altogether by a feeble mound, which, as it gives way, lets in the deep waters upon the soul with the power of an overwhelming flood.

A number of circumstances combine to force sin upon the notice, even when there is a general desire to overlook it. External objects and events may frequently make it pass in review before the spectator. More commonly it is excited feeling that fixes it constantly before the mind, so that, turn itself as it may, it ever sees the deed standing out in colours of flame, like a lurid light glaring in the midst of darkness, and attracting the eye, though only to pain and annoy it. A crime long concealed from the public gaze has at length, let us suppose, been detected, the indignation of the whole community is excited, and the finger of reproach is pointed at the perpetrator. It is manifest, that he cannot now banish the recollection of the offence so constantly or effectually as he was wont. It will rise up anew with every feeling of wounded vanity, and whenever he is exposed to studied neglect or insult. We can account, on precisely the same principles, for a seemingly contradictory phenomenon—the great annoyance given by the conscience in cases in which constant exertion requires to be made to keep the crime concealed. The very attempt at concealment, according to the natural law of association, must keep the deed perpetually before the mind, to awaken the conscience and madden the soul. The man who has such a fearful secret to keep has a fire in his bosom which he is "gathering to keep it warm;" and he would not be lacerated by the lash of public reprobation so fearfully as by these scorpions of his own exasperated conscience. The sin is also kept before the mind, and the conscience troubled, when there is any circumstance connected with the commission of the sin which is fitted to excite the social and sympathetic emotions. When the shrieks of the murdered, for instance, ring for years in the ears of the murderer, the mind cannot but be in a state of constant restlessness—the burning centre of the most intense anguish.

In other cases, the troubling of the conscience is produced, we can scarcely tell how, by the state of the nervous system, or by an accidental event, recalling the deed committed to oblivion, or by a sudden flashing of some willingly forgotten scene upon the mind, revealing, like the lightning's glare at night, dreadful depths of darkness. In regard to such phenomena, we may know what are the general laws; though it may be as difficult to condescend upon the specific causes, as it is to tell the immediate cause of the raising this gust of wind, or of this cloudy atmosphere, of both of which we may know perfectly what are the general means of their production.

The swelling of the passions has often been compared very appropriately to that of the waves of the ocean. The reproaches of conscience bear a greater resemblance to the *ground swell*, thus described by an eloquent scientific female writer :—" It continues to heave the smooth and glassy surface of the deep, long after the winds and billows are at rest. A swell frequently comes from a quarter in direct opposition to the wind, and sometimes from various points of the compass at the same time, producing a vast commotion in a dead sea without ruffling the surface. They are the heralds that point out to the mariner the distant region where the tempest has howled, and they are not unfrequently the harbingers of its approach."* Every word of this description might be applied to those reproaches, which, coming from various quarters, and rising at a great distance, move the soul far beneath the surface, and tell at once of sin that may be long past, and of storms yet to arise.

Sometimes these reproaches are but momentary flashes, extinguished in darkness ; at other times they are a constant firing. Human misery is consummated, when the gnawings become constant, eating like a cancer ever inwards. The memory of sin is now the only object on which the mind can fix. The conscience unceasingly chides, and all its chidings are prolonged and repeated, as by surrounding echoes. An avenging power is seen ever hovering over the soul, like a bird of prey over its victim. Who can describe to others the pain produced, when these convictions coil around the mind as serpents coiled around Laocoon ? Nor can any change of scene or position lessen or distract the misery. You may recommend scenes of mirth and amusement ; but their very music grates upon the ear, and is as the "singing of songs to a heavy heart." You may recommend the beauties of nature—the bracing breeze, and the gladdening sunshine—the stream, fitted to make the heart to leap as lively as itself—the mountain, whose air becomes purer and more ethereal as we rise higher and higher, elevating the spirits as we ascend, and expanding the mind as the prospect widens—or the ocean, the sight and sound of which are ever as fresh to the exhausted spirit as the breeze which blows from it is to the exhausted body ;

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* Sommerville's Physical Geography.

but it is all to no purpose; for when there is music in the ear, there is discord in the heart—when there is glad sunshine without, there is darkness within.

It is the world within that needs to be rectified, and then it will gladden the world without, as by a perpetual sunshine streaming upon it. But this rectification must proceed from a higher power than the perverted mind of man.

SECT. VII.—RESTRAINTS LAID UPON MAN BY THE CONSCIENCE—THEIR EXTENT AND CHARACTER.

Though man is fallen, there is abundant scope for the exercise of many of the original properties of his nature. Every one acknowledges, for instance, that there is room for the play of the ingenuity and fancy in man's existing nature, and that the sympathetic and social affections may be as strong and lively as ever. We maintain, farther, that in not a few cases, the conscience is making its power felt in the way of instigating to what is good, and restraining from what is evil. It cannot be denied, that great and beneficial ends are produced in the government of the world by the exercise of this faculty, weak and imperfect though it be. But let us properly understand in what sense, and under what restrictions, the admission is made.

The possession of conscience does not make any man morally good, but it undoubtedly renders every man a responsible agent. It would be an evident error to affirm, that if man were without a conscience, he would commit a greater amount of wickedness; for, so constituted, he could be as little capable of moral evil as of moral excellence. But if we cannot, with any propriety of language, affirm, that without the possession of the conscience, human wickedness would have been greater than it is; it is perfectly competent to assert that, without such a restraint, human passion would have raged more furiously, and that the human misery produced would have been vastly more extensive. The conscience, weak and perverted though it be, is one instrument employed by God to hold mankind in subjection in spite of their wickedness. Bacon speaks of it as "sufficient to check the vice, but not to inform the duty." Though chained like the watch-dog, it does, at least at times, give warning of danger. This broken rudder is not capable of conducting the vessel into the harbour; but may be used for preventing it, till certain ends have been accomplished, from dashing upon the rocks. "We believe," says Vinet, "in the wreck of humanity; we believe that its unfortunate ship has perished, but that the remains of that great catastrophe float on the waves. A few of these are fit for some use, but none of them can bear to the shore the least of the passengers."

In many cases, there is direct obedience, not indeed full and constant, but partial and occasional, to the dictates of the conscience. Let it be acknowledged frankly, and without any mental reservation whatsoever, that there is in society much sterling honesty, proceeding from conscientious integrity of character, and not from any discovery of the advantages which may spring from the course of conduct pursued. Not only so, there is in many a high sense of honour, and a noble-minded generosity of character, originating in a largeness of heart, and guided by an acute sense of right and wrong, which command our esteem and admiration. We always suspect the man who sneers at the idea of the existence of human integrity and benevolence, that he is himself the villain which he believes others to be. Now, it needs but a moment's reflection to discover, how much the peace and general wellbeing of society are promoted by the belief in this high honour and disinterested philanthropy. Though society could be held together in a sort of way by the restraints of God's providence, it would be a sad scene of constant jealousy, without the mutual confidence engendered by sterling honour and generous love.

But while it is freely admitted that the peace and decorum of society are thereby greatly furthered, we are not therefore to conclude that human nature is spotlessly pure. The disorganization of the mind may be discovered in the very character of the restraints which the conscience imposes. There is a favouritism displayed where all may seem to be candour, and the partiality of the judge comes out in the selection of the cases in which a righteous judgment is pronounced.

Let us mark the peculiarities of those cases in which the conscience is in the way of controlling the mind, and directing it aright. *As a general rule, it is most disposed to do so when the sin, after commission, would be forced most readily and frequently upon the cognizance of the conscience.* As for instance—

First, when it is known that external circumstances must force the sin upon the attention. Mankind in general avoid those sins which after commission must be constantly recalled by events ever occurring. Nor is there need of any profound reasoning to discover what sins must thus bring so immediate a punishment—the mind discovers them at once, and flees from them as naturally and spontaneously as it would from a precipice or any manifest bodily peril. It is in consequence of this salutary awe that we find external sins avoided by persons who meanwhile cherish the sinful feeling and purpose. Lewd thoughts, malice, and revenge, are mentally indulged by thousands who refrain from perpetrating the corresponding deed, and this not merely from a perception of the reproach with which they would be visited by their fellow-men upon the act becoming manifest, but because of the chiding of their own hearts, called up by the public notice taken of them. Hence it is, likewise, that there is commonly a restraint on those sins which call forth instantly the reprobation of society. But those offences are most keenly condemned which inflict immediate injury on the temporal interests of mankind. Deceit and dishonesty, and the kindred vices, are those which are most deeply felt by society as inflicting the greatest amount of injury, and these are the vices which the wise and prudent man is most disposed to avoid. Hence the straightforward honesty and sensitive honour so characteristic of our higher class of men of business. It would be altogether a miserable fetch to impute this, their distinguishing quality, to a mere refinement of selfishness—it proceeds rather from a becoming fear of the accusations of a conscientious mind.

It is for a like reason that we find the general tone of morality in society exercising a powerful influence on the individual members of it. When the standard of honour and virtue is high in a community—when, for instance, unbecoming levity in the female sex, and everything mean on the part of the higher classes of society are severely reprobated, when industry and honesty are commended among the poor—then we find a shrinking from all those violations of established propriety which would expose the individual not only to the scorn of men's tongues, but, along with that, to what is more fearful, the gnawings of a dissatisfied mind. On the other hand, when the standard of society is low—when no mark of disgrace is attached to unchastity, to meanness or to dishonesty—we find persons falling greedily into these sins, and contriving easily to avoid the reproaches of conscience. A member of a community of robbers or pirates can, with comparatively little self-reproach, inflict injury on society at large every day of his life, and his compunctions become acute only when he is tempted to act unfaithfully towards that band with which he is associated. Hence we find criminals perpetrating without much remorse the most enormous crimes against mankind at large, and yet maintaining a nice sense of honour in reference to one another. This, too, is a cause (additional to that before noticed) of the circumstance that mankind in general are upright in their transactions with one another, while they are utterly ungrateful and rebellious in their conduct towards God, their governor and best benefactor. Must there not be some fearful derangement in man's nature when sins are weighed, not in the unchangeable scale of God's law, but the varying scale of ever-shifting circumstances?

Secondly, sins are avoided when the social and sympathetic feelings of man's nature tend to recall them frequently and vividly. The feelings referred to will fall to be considered in the next chapter. They are in themselves different from the moral feelings, and are commonly far more powerful, owing to their liveliness in their influence upon the character. They must give a strong bias to the train of association; and whatever sins rouse them into operation, must of necessity be much before the mind. Hence we find the attention dwelling on sins, not in proportion to their greatness, but according as the occurrence may have excited and interested the emotions. Hence we find, in all minds not utterly abandoned, an instinctive shuddering at crimes which produce instantly bodily suffering or mental anguish, fitted to move the more tender feelings of man's nature. It is owing to this cause, perhaps, more than to the healthy working of the conscience, considered in itself, that we find the murderer, the seducer, and the defrauder of the simple, haunted by such fearful reproaches, with nothing to lessen or alleviate them. We can believe all that is said about the murderer feeling as if the stain of the blood of his victim could never be washed out, and as if he saw the wounds ever open, and blood flowing from them. It is pleasant to think that the widow, the orphan, the poor, and the afflicted, have thus a powerful friend, not only in the sympathetic feelings of every man's bosom, but in the moral sense called up by these feelings to the discharge of its duties. This is one of the helps which God provides for the helpless—one of the most potent defences of the defenceless.

We now see in what circumstances the conscience is apt to be deadened, and in what circumstances it is apt to be roused. We see how mankind can continue in a most apathetic state in reference to sins of which the whole race is guilty, while they are sensitive as to other sins, less heinous, it may be, but which are generally abhorred. We see, too, why certain sins come to weigh heavily on the mind, while others are speedily forgotten.

> " Great crimes alarm the conscience, but she sleeps
> While thoughtful man is plausibly amused."—COWPER.

The great crimes which alarm the conscience are commonly deeds which arouse the sympathies or startle the sensibilities of mankind ; but the other sins which he forgets are those which in no way move the common interests of humanity. We see likewise how sins, forgotten for a time, may be made to flash before the mind by the recalling of associated circumstances, or how they may be steadfastly forced upon the attention by the power of associated feelings. This topic will fall to be resumed in next section.

But in considering how these circumstances bear upon the government of God, it is worthy of being noticed, that by their means God can effectually restrain the vices which have the most pernicious influence upon society. In proportion as society is injured, is its indignation called forth, and in that same proportion is the conscience roused to denounce the perpetrator of the evil ; and in proportion as pain is inflicted, so are the sympathetic feelings of the guilty party moved, and, in awakening the sympathies, there are awakened, at the same time, the more terrible pangs of an accusing conscience. Does it not seem as if God were using the very wrecks of man's nature to keep him from sinking altogether, and making the sinfulness, as he makes the wrath, of man to praise him ?

SECT. VIII.—ON THE EVIL EFFECTS PRODUCED BY A CONDEMNING CONSCIENCE.

The sad effects that follow from a falsely approving conscience, producing a self-deceived, self-satisfied temper of mind, have already been pointed out. We are now to contemplate the evil effects which originate in a condemning conscience. These are greater and more numerous than the superficial observer is apt to imagine. Their source lies deep down in the human heart, and is therefore unseen, but is on that account the more tremendously powerful.

We are inclined to refer much of the discontent which abounds in the world to the influence of an unsatisfied conscience. As repeated neglects of duty pass under the notice of the mind, there is a wretchedness ever renewed, though very possibly without the individual being at all aware of the source from which it springs. In this respect it resembles the constant uneasiness produced by the derangement of the digestive organs, or the irritation caused by a diseased nervous system. The reproaches of the conscience, though individually transient, exercise, by their recurrence, a powerful influence. They resemble those noxious ephemera which make up in number what they want in strength; and while the individuals perish, the species survives. By their constant renewal they disturb the flow of association in the mind, and dispose it to anxiety and fretfulness. An accusing conscience must thus ever be rendering the possessor restless and unhappy. We refer to this cause much of what we call temper, both of peevish and violent temper. True, the individual may not know the quarter from which the restlessness which he feels proceeds—nay, he may be inclined to trace it to every other source rather than the true one. He thinks that it arises from his condition, and hence his constant endeavours to better his position, to free himself from certain external inconveniences, and to attain certain temporal privileges; or he refers it to the ill usage which he receives from mankind in general, or from certain individuals who have thwarted, envied, or insulted him, and hence his irritability or the obstinacy of his temper. He may not be aware of it—nay, he might scout at the idea, if propounded to him; but nevertheless it is certain that the spring of his misery is to be found in a conscience awakened without being pacified.

We are inclined to refer not only much of human misery, but much more than is commonly supposed, of human sinfulness, to the working of an evil conscience. Much of human passion and human violence is the fire and sound emitted by nature in its effort to restore a deranged equilibrium. Alas! we cannot even understand man's wickedness, under some of its forms, without taking into account the existence of a moral sense. It is possible for the conscience to become a deranging instead of a regulating power; and when it does so, it becomes the most corrupting of all agents, even as water, so essential to all living vegetation, becomes the most powerful of all means of corruption in a plant deprived of vitality.

Whatever rankles the mind—and nothing so much rankles it as an unappeased conscience—must tend to keep alive the worst feelings of the heart. The fever produced will prompt to anger, to ambition, and to every passion which may carry away the individual from himself, or absorb him in strife or in the giddy whirl of business or pleasure. And there are times when the sleeping volcano will burst out with awful and irresistible power. "A wounded spirit who can bear?" and that which is intolerable within will find vent without. When the mind is thrown into a tumult—when it is tossed from the lowest depths—all that is impure will be cast up, like the "troubled sea when it cannot rest, and whose waves cast up mire and dirt." Some of the direst crimes ever committed have been prompted by this laceration of spirit, as when the guilty have sought to rid themselves of those who have been witnesses of their crimes, or whose presence told them of their guilt, or whose lives have been a reproach upon their own. Some of the incidents of greatest horror recorded in history have originated in the aversion of the mind to the near contact to spotless virtue. The Athenian mob were allowing more truth to escape from them than mankind are accustomed to do, when they gave as their reason for banishing Aristides, that they did not relish the constant reference made to his justice. Not a few of the murders of wives by their husbands, and of husbands by their wives, have sprung from a determination to be rid of the memorials of broken vows. We can trace to no other source than a conscience goading on the passions, the demoniacal deeds which have been committed around the martyr's funeral pile. So potent is this principle, that we believe it capable of explaining the fearful scenes at the foot of the Cross, where the meekest of sufferers was denied the sympathy which has not been withheld at a dying hour even from the vilest malefactor.

If we would understand all the effects which follow from a condemning conscience, we must not forget that the passions are often irritated and inflamed by the opposition offered to them. It is proverbial that what is forbidden is apt to be the more eagerly sought after. Nor is it difficult to account for this. The mind under the influence of desire dwells on the prohibition and the thing prohibited, becomes more eagerly bent on obtaining it, and chafes at the denial. The effect of the interposition of the conscience in such circumstances is only to exasperate the mind; just as the rocks which do not impede the stream serve to dash it into greater violence. The natural effect of a monitor warning, without being attended to, must be an increased irritability of spirit. The ocean, even when the waves are high, never seems to rage in all its fury except at the shore, where it is opposed by breakers; the deepest stream will flow along softly, and almost imperceptibly, till it meets with opposing rocks or cliffs, which dash it from one to another, when it is forthwith lashed into foam; and it is from a like cause that the rebellious temper of man rages against the conscience, when it would lay restraints upon him. Paul seems to refer to this power of an awakened conscience :—"Sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence." As the prisoner will tear his chains, and beat upon his prison walls, so will the spirit of man fret and rage, when it feels its fetters, and yet is not able to break them. It is the wild beast beating upon its cage, and, indignant at every restraint upon it, becoming more furious than when it ranged in the forest. Scourged by remorse, there are multitudes who have sought to drown their pain by the most frantic movements. Criminals have been known, with the view of diverting their minds, to jest even upon the scaffold. Others have sought to madden their minds, and so to ease their feelings, by rushing into unblushing profligacy and daring criminality, and would drown the remembrance of old iniquities by the noise which new ones create.

In other cases, the mind is hardened into a confirmed rebellion against God and all that is good. This effect follows, whenever it is constrained to look constantly at the sins of which it yet does not repent.

In ordinary circumstances the passions of the soul, by means of the conspiracy which they have hatched, contrive to deceive the conscience, but they will not always be so successful. Speaking of the conscience, Bishop Reynolds says—"Though in many men it sleep in regard to motion, yet it never sleeps in regard to observation and notice—it may be heard and seared, it can never be blind. That writing on it, which seems invisible and illegible, like letters written with the juice of lemon, when it is brought to the fire of God's judgments, will be most clear."* The time is coming when the mask which man wears will be torn off, and his character will be displayed to himself in all its hideousness and deformity. There are circumstances occurring in the world quite sufficient to explain what is here meant.

Let us look, in the way of marking the operations of the mind, at those persons who go on for years in a course of undetected sin, but who are afterwards exposed. There is a servant, let us suppose, cheating his master, or one of the sex in which chastity is so highly valued giving way to an unlawful lust; we are to mark the state of mind of such persons, first, when the sin is yet concealed, and then when it comes to be detected and published. Though they will, no doubt, be troubled all along with secret misgivings and reproaches, it is astonishing to find what habitual calmness they may assume—nay, what complacency they may feel, at least if they have no difficulty in concealing their sins. After the first awkwardness has been conquered, it is conceivable that the parties may feel at ease in the very presence of the master deceived, or of the husband to whom the wife has proved unfaithful. It is evident that, besides a studious concealment from the eyes of others, there is also a hiding of the sin from the eyes of the guilty parties themselves. They think of the sinful deed as seldom as possible; and when it is brought before the mind, it is in a disguised dress and appearance. Society will condemn the deed when known, and equally certain is it that the conscience will condemn it every time it is presented. If the scorn of men be difficult to endure, the constant gnawing of self-reproach is, if possible, still more intolerable. Hence the ingenious stratagems of concealment which the mind is ever plotting, with at least temporary success. The person acts the hypocrite to himself, and uses as many contrivances to save appearances before the censor within, as to shield himself from the criticisms of the world without.

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* Bishop Reynolds on the Affections.

But let us suppose that the crime is now discovered, and let us mark the effect. It is one or other of the two following:—the person is humbled and grieved, and becomes penitent and reformed—or more commonly the result is the very opposite, he becomes hardened, and sets the opinion of mankind at defiance. When this latter is the issue, the individual from that instant becomes more open and unblushing in criminality. He acts not only in contempt of the opinion of society, but in more direct rebellion against the dictates of conscience. The old motives which led him to conceal from the community the sins which he was committing, have now lost their force, and have taken with them almost all his old methods of concealing his sins from himself; and now he sins not only more openly, but more greedily and recklessly. He feels like the gambler who has lost at one venture nearly his whole property; he thinks he may risk the remainder, it is so small. This is the feeling of the man whom crime hath deprived of peace of conscience! he acts as if farther crime could scarcely make him more wretched.

It seems that there are cataracts in the descending stream of wickedness at which the fall is more tremendous than at other places. Let us take another illustrative case. Let us trace the descent of a criminal who has been hardened by the sentence pronounced upon him, and the punishment to which he has been subjected. Let us mark how he goes down step by step in the scale of being, and how the very interferences with him are the means of hurrying him down the faster, as he breaks loose from them—just as the abutting rocks that would stop the rolling stone are often the means of making it take a more tremendous leap. Under the influence of some transient feeling, not without criminality, a youth, we shall suppose, is tempted to engage in some night foray which ends in pilfering, and he is in consequence apprehended, condemned, and subjected to confinement for a certain length of time. It is a critical period in his history. Suppose him to be brought to true repentance, we may have from this time a life of persevering integrity. But suppose, on the other hand, that he is led to spurn at the sentence, and endure the penalty in a grumbling spirit; from that date there will, in all probability, be a succession of crimes leading to a succession of condemnations, and the whole rendering the heart more hardened than ever.

Now, the issue must be analogous, in regard to all men, when at any time they are made to feel deeply and solemnly, be it in this life or the life to come, that God is calling them into judgment. We say in this life, because there are times in the history of the world, and in the history of every individual, when God seems to be setting up a throne of judgment on the earth, and calling men before it. Certain it is, that every man must at length stand before the Judge of the universe. When thus summoned into the presence of the Judge of all, it must be for one or other of two purposes—either to have his sins forgiven, or to have them charged upon him. In the former case, it is conceivable that, with the sentence of condemnation removed, the heart, without any violence done to its principles, may be inclined to submission and repentance. Hence the appropriateness of the plan of salvation revealed in the gospel, which disarms rebellion by providing a free forgiveness. But it is to the other alternative that our attention is at present called. Man, we suppose, is summoned to give account of his deeds to a Judge who cannot possibly be deceived.

Unable to justify himself, with no promise of forgiveness, with no disposition to repent, the natural result is sulkiness and open rebellion. Were there room for deception, the party might be prompted to excuse or lessen his sin; or with the promise of forgiveness, he might be disposed at least to profess repentance, and might have a momentary desire to practise it. But if repentance be impossible on the one hand, and the door of hope seem to be shut on the other, every principle of man's nature will drive him on to the recklessness which proceeds from conscious guilt and despair.

Meanwhile his sin will stand disclosed before him in all its hideousness and with nothing to conceal it. The remembrance of sin, we have seen, may be called up either by external circumstances, or by a powerful inward feeling. Both of these now combine to keep his sin before him. Why am I so situated? is the constant inquiry put. Because of sin, is the answer uttered, as it were, by a responsive voice from our own bosoms. And these feelings of intense anguish, whence come they?—Because of sin, is the reply, prolonged, as it were, by subterranean thunders. But the sentence is unnecessarily severe. Well, let me consider why it is inflicted. Because of sin, is the sound heard, as coming with awful solemnity from heaven, and from the very mouth of the Judge. But this sin is not so great after all, it is suggested. Well, let me examine it. "Here is a sin," is the voice coming from one quarter; "Here is a sin," is the voice coming from another quarter; till earth, over all its wide surface, joins with heaven and hell in ringing the sound of sin in the ear.

The insects which issue from an ant-hill, when it is stirred, are not so numerous nor fierce as the eager reproaches which come forth, when the judgments of heaven visit the spirit. All the scenes of the past life, even those regarded as most interesting at the time, and remembered with greatest pleasure ever since, are now made to disclose to the view the sin involved in them, but which was for a time concealed beneath the lovely foliage on which the eye rested. This youthful frolic, which once communicated such pleasure in the remembrance—ah! it is now seen that it proceeded from vanity. This deed of generosity to man—alas! it was accompanied with an utter contempt of God. Nor was Fitz-James more astonished, when, in one of the most magnificent, and seemingly one of the most peaceful, scenes in nature, there sprung up an armed warrior from every bush and brake and hollow, than the person who has walked through life in a vain show, when his sins at last start up before him.

> "Wild as the scream of the curlew
> From crag to crag the signal flew—
> Instant, through copse and heath, arose
> Bonnets, and spears, and bended bows:
> On right, on left, above, below,
> Sprung up at once the lurking foe;
> From shingles grey their lances start—
> The bracken bush sends forth the dart;
> The rushes and the willow wand
> Are bristling into axe and brand;
> And every tuft of broom gives life
> To plaided warrior arm'd for strife—
> As if the yawning hell to heaven
> A subterranean host had given."

All of us who have experienced anything like the following may comprehend how there should be such a resurrection of feeling. Conceive a world-involved man taking a quiet day, in a life of engrossing business, to visit the scenes of his childhood. The house in which he was reared—the room in which he slept—the field in which he played—the garden or glen in which he gathered flowers—this gnarled oak, and that sequestered dell—have all an attraction to him which they have to no other; and their attraction arises from their raising recollections of scenes which seemed to be for ever lost, but which were vastly interesting at the time, as they are still interesting in the gushing memory of them as they well up from the mind as waters from a fountain. Events which were regarded as absolutely buried are made to spring up in vivid reality, and they come with intense power to move the soul to mirth or melancholy. It is an experimental proof of the possibility of the resurrection of buried thoughts. So far as forgotten sins are concerned, the conscience is the archangel's trumpet, whose sound raises them from the graves to which they had been consigned, in the hope that they might dwell in perpetual darkness; and they stand before us shivering and shaking, calling on the hills to cover them, and the caves to hide them—but all to no purpose, for there is no place in which these risen ghosts can find a shelter, except in the land of perpetual darkness, where their misery is concealed, though not lessened or remedied. There is a death for the soul, but there is no grave in which to bury it.

But will the mind not endeavour still to conceal the guilt from itself? Most assuredly it will, but in a new way. The old methods have failed, but new ones will present themselves, and be eagerly followed. After the exposure which has been made, it knows that it cannot conceal inself in its old mantle; it must therefore find a new one, which if not so fair and becoming, nor adapted for concealment, may yet be harder and more impenetrable, and fitted for defence; and underneath the external garb, when it is torn away, there will be found a coat of mail for protection. The man cannot now flatter himself into the belief that his virtues are numerous and his faults few; for, as he stood at the bar of the Judge, he got a view of his character in all its blackness and hideousness. Still he cannot bear the continual gnawings of that condemning conscience. But if it cannot be silenced, may he not succeed in getting beyond the reach of its voice? Or he may allow other feelings to hurry him along till the sound no longer falls upon his ear. Such feelings will rise up spontaneously in the mind, under the irritation produced by the condemning sentence of the judge; and if these feelings of rage and disappointment can but allow the mind to escape the conscience, they will be willingly followed. Not that they are felt to be pleasant, but they are at least of a more moving and hurrying character than those which oppress the spirit, as the conscience utters its judgments, and admits of no appeal. If they do not give relief, they at least furnish a change of misery, as the man racked with pain on all sides will again and again change his posture, were it only to vary his distress. Tied, like Mazeppa, on a courser over which he has no control, he would feel a kind of ecstasy in the very wildness of its careering. Not only so, but acquiring courage from despair, he may proceed the length of making war with the judge. Since he cannot flee from him, he will perhaps affect to contemn him, or impugn the authority of his law.

> "Souls who dare look the omnipotent tyrant in
> His everlasting face, and tell him that
> His evil is not good."—BYRON'S CAIN.

But this is by no means so easy a work, for meanwhile God has a witness in every man's bosom. There must be some way of deluding this witness before so bold a step can be taken. The spirit will now try to make the conscience condemn the judge, as being harsh and relentless. Strange and paradoxical as it may appear, it will, to some extent, be successful. It will picture to the conscience the condemnation pronounced, as a dark deed of tyranny and revenge committed by God; and believing, or trying to believe, that God is malignant, it will view Him with the feelings which malignity should inspire. And now the soul will not only be angry with God, but feel as if it did right to be angry, and the war which it carries on will not only be that of the passions, but of an evil conscience. The feelings roused will be a strange mixture of heat and cold. The whole soul will, as it were, be travelling constantly from "beds of raging fire to starve in ice;" and there will be found in it such extremes as Sir James Ross saw in those lofty mountains near the south pole, where molten lava, with a glaring light, constantly poured itself on eternal snows. The war, too, will now be incessant. If the war were merely that of the passions, there might be cessations and gaps and intervals; but being now that of a troubled conscience, as well as that of a disordered heart, it becomes a constant and everlasting warfare, without respite and without end.

Such seems to be the necessary issue of the very principles in the nature of responsible beings. It is conceivable, then, that there may be beings, angelic beings, who wage a never-ceasing warfare with God, urged on by a disordered conscience, and passions which have broken loose from all restraint. Man's reason and experience cannot tell him that there are such beings, but they show that there may be such, and that this is the natural and—unless God miraculously interpose—the necessary result of the fall of beings who have a moral law in their hearts. Every one can understand how a criminal, repeatedly condemned and punished by an earthly judge, becomes hardened in the very process. This phenomenon, constantly presented in every country, is the natural issue of principles in the mind of fallen man. But these same principles, on the condemnation being pronounced by the Judge of the universe, will lead to a similar result; and just as we find that those who have once been elevated become the most degraded on their being seduced into crime; just as we find the most abandoned criminals in nations that are refined; so we may expect that beings who stand the highest must descend the lowest when they fall—their very previous exaltation making them roll the farther down. Revelation is not, then, telling us of an impossibility, in announcing that there are fallen angels ever incited by restlessness within, to try new projects of wickedness, were it only to vary the sameness of their misery; ever seeking to extract a bitter consolation from the frustration of the Divine purposes and the extension of vice and misery, and to drag down others with them into that abyss into which they have been plunged. He who fell by pride, may surely now be expected to gratify an unruly ambition by attempting to multiply the restless spirits who may do him homage. True it is that every apparent victory has been followed by overwhelming defeat; but the seeming triumph has been sufficient to goad on that spirit which has nothing to hope from assumed and forced submission, while it is indisposed to genuine repentance. And we have only to look to man, to discover that propensities to evil rush on towards their objects, regardless of consequences, and in contempt of all experience. It seems as if the moral being who falls must fall for ever, and that his descent must be a rapidly accelerated one, the termination of which is to be found only at the bottom of a pit that is bottomless.

Man has only to look within to discover principles which might bring the possessor into a state similar to that of fallen angels. "But for the grace of God, there goes John Bradford," was the exclamation (often quoted) of a well-known Reformer, as he saw a criminal led away to execution. If man will only look into his own heart in a searching manner, he may discover principles which, in some of their possible operations, are capable of sinking him even into the depths of demoniacal wickedness. He who knows his own nature will be prepared to acknowledge that the contest, of which poets have sung, between the spirits of evil and God, are at least possible. Nay, it may be doubted, whether such poets as Milton and Byron could have given such a painfully graphic anatomy of demoniacal pride and passion, had they not drawn from their own nature; or whether we should have been so moved by the description, if there had been nothing responsive in our own bosoms.

> "Thou speak'st to me of things which long have swam
> In visions through my thought."—BYRON'S CAIN.

Combining these considerations, which have a foundation in the principles of our fallen nature, it is difficult to see how, if God does not interpose, man can stop short of the demoniacal state. There are persons who wonder that man should be consigned to the place prepared for the devil and his angels; but when he has acquired the character of the devil and his angels, in what place can he so appropriately be?

There is one other tendency of falling humanity to which it is needful to attend. We would call it the drying up of the natural affections, according as wickedness increases, and the heart becomes rebellious.

We have already contemplated one striking manifestation of this tendency, in the natural feeling being restrained from flowing towards God, from the very instant that sin was committed. It is evidently an authentic statement that is given of the conduct of our first parents, when they are represented, after their first act of sin, as avoiding the presence of God. They did not flee from one another; they had still love one to another; but they now felt the presence of God repulsive, and they had already ceased to love him. We see that a guilty conscience is capable of drying up one stream of affection; it has dried up the stream of love that flowed towards God. In the affection which man lavishes, God is the exception; it would seem as if he could love everything except his Maker.

At least he seems capable of doing so in the earlier stages of his career. But the same guilty conscience that has dried up one stream can dry up others. Hence the prejudices against certain individuals—the envy, the malice, the revenge that are to be found in the world—these are not original parts of man's constitution, but acquisitions made, to some extent at least, by a guilty conscience, and to the full extent by the conscience neglecting to exercise its legitimate control.

There seems to be an impression among some, that if conscience were the supreme regulator of human conduct, it would give the character so far a stern and forbidding aspect, by preventing the flow of human affection. But this proceeds from a mistaken notion. It is one of the highest offices of the conscience, in directing all the principles of the mind, to guide in an especial manner the affections, and cause them to flow out, in due measure, in their proper channels. The instant effect of a deranged conscience is the drying up of one of the streams—that which should flow towards God; and the drying up of other streams follows in the progress of wickedness. In the deranged nature of man, the fountains of the affections, which should have been kept pure and fresh, are first allowed to be partially choked up and polluted, then the waters flow in perverted channels, and finally they are lost altogether in the barren sands to which they are carried.

In this downward career there is no change of the fundamental principles and constituents of man's nature; yet there are sad changes of personal character. There are numberless analogies in human life to show, that there may be a change of the train of feelings in the mind, with no change in the original faculties. Look first at this sprightly girl, then at this sober matron, and then at this forlorn widow; it is the same person throughout, but how different the individual thoughts and emotions at these different times! Compare her at this present moment, grieving over the recent loss of her earthly partner, with what she was but a few weeks ago. Or follow that widow into the work in which she is now called to engage, and mark the new energies called forth by the unexpected situations in which she is placed. In these new scenes she is the same as she was five years ago as the wife, or as she was twenty years ago as the lively girl—yet how different the train of thought and feeling! We urge this merely as an illustration of an interesting psychological phenomenon, and as preparing us to believe, that in the downward progress of wickedness there may be fearful changes—and they must be changes to the worse—in human character. There is not a greater difference between the sparkling diamond and the black carbon into which it may be burnt, than there is between the original soul of man, transparent and lustrous, and the same soul calcined by the fires of guilt into the darkest indifference and the most sordid selfishness.

In particular, we may anticipate a drying up of natural affection. The raven that brought intelligence to Apollo was white till it conveyed the sad news of the death of a favourite, when its colour instantly became black: almost as great, almost as sudden, is the change of feeling with which men view certain objects after a change of circumstances. In the vernal days of youth and prosperity, the affections flow and sparkle on all sides, and water and refresh every object near them. But as years roll on, they are more sparing and restricted in their current. Competition, clashing interests, and selfishness begin to produce an apathy; then the malign passions breaking out, engender a fixed hatred and antipathy. These are the lessons commonly learned by human nature in the school of the world, where selfishness in one leads to selfishness in another, and malignity in one party leads to malignity in the opposite party. The general result is, that first the leaves wither—they may remain for a time in this state—and then they are driven away.

But we are now contemplating the effects produced on the affections, not by the world, but by that judgment which we have supposed God to institute, and issuing in the positive and open rebellion of man. It is difficult to see how any affection, except of the most perverted kind, can outlive such a scorching of the soul. The amazon, in her warlike pursuits, had her breast dried up that she might fight the more fiercely; and there is, we suspect, such a drying up of the breasts of human affection in the indulgence of the fierce feelings called up by a condemning conscience. We doubt much if a soul so maddened by the conscience can ever afterwards look upon any object with kindness and complacency. There is more than a freezing of the affection, such as may be produced by the cold atmosphere of the world—for if there was nothing but a freezing, the affection might again melt and flow in a more genial clime; this awful judgment, like the Medusa's head, has turned it into hard and enduring stone.

SECT. IX.—GENERAL REVIEW OF MAN'S EXISTING MORAL NATURE.

In the researches prosecuted in this chapter, we have had little assistance afforded, at least directly, by other inquirers into human nature.* Metaphysical and ethical writers have commonly contented themselves with investigating the original moral constitution of man's mind, and developing the office of the moral faculty; but they have instituted no particular inquiry into, nor given any explanation of, its existing state. On the other hand, we find in the writings of divines many statements and speculations as to the present state of man's heart; but then there is no inquiry into the original and indestructible structure of man's moral nature. Every thinking mind has felt that there is a gap to fill up between such writers as Hutcheson, Reid, Stewart, Brown, Mackintosh, Kant, Cousin, and Jouffroy, on the one hand, and the common treatises of divinity, such as those of Augustine, Calvin, Owen, and Edwards, on the other.†

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* There are important principles, however, laid down in several of the discourses of Chalmers and Vinet.

† This discrepancy was clearly perceived by the acute and accomplished mind of Dr. Wardlaw. It may be doubted, however, whether he has been successful in constructing in his Christian Ethics a system at once philosophical and scriptural. Towards the close of the seventeenth century, there arose a set of writers who sought to meet the rising rationalism by maintaining that the human faculties, in consequence of their being depraved, could not establish any body of truth. The religious philosophers of the following age followed a better method, and used the human understanding in building a system of evidences in behalf of Christianity. Wardlaw has fallen into an error in reference to the conscience, similar to that which was committed by the parties referred to in regard to human reason. Instead of slighting or setting aside the revelations of conscience, it is surely vastly

We have not felt ourselves called on to dispute the general accuracy of the investigations of ethical writers, who have given a high place to the moral faculty, and who have sought to exalt man's moral nature. It is difficult to convince those who have been taught to look upon man as merely the highest of the animals, as merely an upper brute, that there should be such things as sin and salvation. We rejoice then to find certain great and important truths established regarding man's moral constitution, and instead of overlooking them, we have sought to apply them to the existing state of man. There are parts of the writings of all the philosophers referred to, in which they admit that the conscience has not in fact the control which it ought to have; but they speedily lose sight of their own admission, or at least attempt no explanation of a phenomenon which, to say the least of it, is as worthy of being investigated as the original functions of the conscience. We have as certain evidence that the conscience convicts every given man of sin, as we have of the very existence of the conscience itself. It is upon the very doctrine that the philosophers have established, that we have sought to rear the other doctrine, which they are so averse to look at. Adopting the principles which philosophers have furnished, we have followed them to their legitimate consequences; and in doing so, we have arrived at the same conclusions in regard to the corruption of man's nature, as those divines who have derived their views from the volume of inspiration.

While the view presented of human nature has been sufficiently dark and melancholy, it has at the same time been discriminating, which the doctrine set forth by divines has not always been. In maintaining the total depravity of man's nature, they have been afraid to make the least admission as

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wiser to attempt to unfold them and use them to give a contribution to the Christian evidences—a thing which cannot be done by those who deny to the conscience an independent authority. It is a mistake to imagine that conscience can do everything; but it is equally a mistake to suppose that it can do nothing. (1.) Its fundamental laws furnish a foundation to Ethics; (2.) It reveals a law which constitutes all men responsible; (3.) It restrains from many sins; (4.) It shews that all men are sinners; (5.) It points to the need of a Redeemer; (6.) When rectified by heavenly aid it is the means of exciting to all excellence. All this may be maintained in perfect consistency by those who acknowledge, (1.) That the possession of it does not render any man virtuous; (2.) That it cannot, apart from revelation, set before us a perfect moral standard; and (3.) That it cannot keep from all sin or conduct to true holiness.

to the qualities and features of man's character, which are undoubtedly pleasing and praiseworthy in themselves; and they have taken great pains to explain away those numerous passages of God's Word which "accord to human virtues those praises which could not be accorded to them in a system which denies all moral value in the actions of men."*

In particular, we have seen, (1.) That the conscience retains in the human mind its original claims of authority. The law is broken, but it is still binding. Then, (2.) There is room in the depraved heart of man for the play and exercise of all the high talents and susceptibilities with which man was originally furnished. (3.) There are still in the human mind many amiable and benevolent qualities. (4.) There are actions of moral honesty and integrity, and even of religion so called, performed in obedience to the conscience. But over against these truths we have to place an equal number of others. As, (1.) While the conscience asserts its claims, these claims are not attended to. (2.) The powers and sensibilities of the mind are abused and perverted. (3.) The affections are not under the control of right principle, and, in particular, are not directed to God as they ought. (4.) The actions, whether of morality or religion, performed in obedience to the conscience, are performed in obedience to a perverted conscience; and so there is something defective in the actions themselves, while the general state of the agent being depraved, we cannot approve of the agent in the acts.

It is of the utmost moment that the doctrine now expounded be distinguished from the miserably low and grovelling views of those who would represent all and each of mankind as utterly selfish and dishonest. This is an opinion, learned not in the school of religion, but in the school of the world. It prevails among the low-minded and the suspicious, and in those ages and states of society in which men's sentiments have been debauched by reigning profligacy, (the most selfish of all the vices, though it may seem the most generous,) or utterly prostrated and perverted by the disappointment succeeding a period of great public profession of generosity which has turned out to be hypocritical. Men judge of others by themselves; and the selfish cannot be brought to believe in the existence of disinterestedness. Those who have made it their business to corrupt their species, and those who habitually mingle with the abandoned, have generally reasoned themselves out of all belief in human virtue. Persons once cheated are afraid of deceit all their lives after; and when nations have come to see the hollowness of the professions of patriotism which those who wish to lead them have made, they are apt to conclude in their haste that all men are deceivers.

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* Vinet.

We are most anxious that it should be observed, that the view which we have presented of human nature encourages no such dark and suspicious sentiments. It does not lead every man to suspect his neighbour; it rather leads every man to be jealous of himself. No two classes of maxims can be more opposed than those of such writers as Rochefoucault and Helvetius, who exhibit human selfishness in unrelieved colours, that we may be brought to distrust all men; and those of good men who love the human race, even when they mourn over its sad degeneracy. We acknowledge that, in perfect consistency with the views above developed, there may be among mankind much real hospitality, kindness, and sympathy with distress; much sincere friendship, noble patriotism, and large-hearted philanthropy; the heart to feel and the hand to help; the spirit to purpose, and the courage to execute, deeds of patience and the highest heroism.

We are most anxious, too, that the views expounded should be distinguished from those of the Utilitarian school of philosophy in this country, and of what has been called the Sensational school in France, and of all who tell us that every man is mainly governed by a regard to his own interest. Truly, there are some who would degrade human nature lower than it is, on the pretence of exalting it. Fallen though mankind be, they are capable of entertaining and cherishing many kindly feelings and benevolent affections, and they are fully as often swayed by impulse, caprice, lust, and passion, as by a systematic selfishness.

We utterly abhor such a sentiment as that on which a certain writer would found a whole theory of jurisprudence, namely, that every man pursues his own interest when he knows it. We may agree with Rochefoucault when he says, "That which we take for virtues is often nothing but an assemblage of divers actions, and of divers interests, which fortune or our own industry knows how to arrange." "We are so prepossessed in a way in our own favour, that what we take for virtues is often nothing but a number of vices which have met together, and which pride and self-love have disguised." But when the same author lets us know elsewhere that he resolves so-called human virtues into the lowest and most grovelling vices, we draw back from his maxims with detestation. "Virtue would not go far if vanity did not keep it company." "That which appears generosity is often nothing but ambition in disguise, despising small interests in order to attain greater."* That there is some justice in these maxims cannot be denied, but we deplore that they should be used for the purpose of furthering so low an object, and leaving so dangerous an impression. The man who believes his whole species to be villains, is sure to end by himself becoming one, if indeed he has not begun by judging others by himself. "I said in my haste, that all men are liars;" the man who says so, not in haste, but in his calm and reflecting moments, is, we suspect, all that he makes others to be. All persons who, like Walpole and Bonaparte, lay it down as a principle that every man has a price and can be corrupted, may be judged by their own standard. Nor can we find language strong enough to condemn that miserable so-called philosophy which tells us, that "a physical sensibility has produced in us a love of pleasure and hatred of pain; that pleasure and pain have at length produced and opened in all hearts the buds of self-love, which, by unfolding themselves, give birth to the passions whence spring all our virtues and vices."† It is true that we must divide off from our catalogue of human virtues many actions which appear virtuous, but which proceed from nothing but pride, vanity, ambition, and a disguised selfishness. But after having made full allowance for such, there still remains a large body of actions, which we must refer to amiable and generous feelings, without one grain of a baser alloy.

There are deeper mysteries in man's spiritual nature than some superficial thinkers ever dream of. Their "inept and unscientific gunnery does not include in its calculations the parabolic curve of man's spiritual nature."‡ Except by taking into our calculation a conscience, and an evil conscience, we cannot comprehend human nature or human action. Those who have left this essential part of man's existing character and nature out of account, have failed to give any rational account of his conduct, more particularly in reference to religion; and as they felt their incompetency, they have burst out into empty declamations against superstition and fanaticism, and have lost their own temper in ridiculing human infirmity. We cannot explain human folly under certain of its modifications—we cannot explain human folly even by human passion—we cannot understand the particular mode and intensity of human wickedness—we are puzzled at every step, till we call in a perverted moral sense. It is by the help of this, the most singular part of man's nature, that we are enabled to account for all other singularities and anomalies of his spiritual constitution.

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* Maxims, 1, 207, 240, 301.

† Helvetius on the Mind.

‡ Miller's First Impressions of England and the English.

Man's fallen, like his original, nature is a deep and a complex one. There are other sins and passions besides those low and base ones into which vulgar minds would resolve every principle of man's heart. Some can discover nothing in man's actuating motives but the love of money, others nothing but the love of praise, and a third class, apparently more profound, resolve all into a refined and far-sighted self-love. These contracted views of narrow minds and suspicious hearts are utterly inadequate to explain the mysteries of the human soul. The lusts and pleasures of the human heart are very numerous, and assume an infinite variety of forms. There may be much sinfulness where there is no selfishness. The very attempts which these men make to find such low motives for human action, indicate how inadequate are their views of the true nature of virtue; for they as much as say, that if they could meet with real kindness and amiability in the world, they would be completely satisfied, though there were no godliness and no moral principle. We include all men under sin, not by seeking to debase the human character lower than it is, but by exalting the standard of virtue —not higher than it ought to be—but by making it such as God hath ordained it in our very constitution.

Not only are these two views, which we may call the selfish and the evangelical, different in themselves—they are different also in their practical influence. The tendency of the one is to render each man satisfied with himself, and suspicious of those with whom he comes in contact. The tendency of the other is to humble every man in his own estimation, and prompt him to use all available means to elevate a race that has sunk to such a depth of degradation. He who habitually looks upon his fellows in the former of these lights is apt to become hard-hearted, cunning, selfish, and grovelling. Believing mankind to be deceivers, he treats them as deceivers, and becomes himself a deceiver in doing so. Imagining himself to be surrounded by persons whose ruling principle is selfishness, and whose mean of furthering their end is deceit, he feels, in dealing with them, as if he were constrained to descend to their level, and fight them with their own weapons. On the other hand, he who views the race as ungodly, but who looks upon himself as tainted with the same evil, will be so awed by a sense of his own sinfulness as to be incapable of judging harshly of others; and the worst feelings with which he regards the race will be those of sorrow and commiseration.

We are not then at liberty to regard man with a cynic, scornful feeling, such as that which rises up when we look at a loathsome reptile. We may denounce man; but we should never despise him. We may blame, but we dare not contemn him, lest, in doing so, we should be contemning the noblest part of the workmanship of God in this lower world. There may be indignation, pity, or horror, but mingled with these there must be feelings of honour, respect, and reverence towards the essential parts and principles of a creature formed in the very image of God. We infer the height at which man was at first placed, from the greatness of his fall; we measure his elevation by the extent of his shadow.

Nor will these views induce us to retire from the world in disgust, or make us feel a less lively interest in the race. The truths on which our mind is made to dwell will rather tend to quicken and strengthen our love, and cause it to flow out in a deeper and stronger current. When is it that we think most of an earthly friend, and are most deeply concerned about his welfare? Is it when he is known to be in safety, dwelling in security in the bosom of his family, far from violence, or disease, or accident? or rather, is it not when he is thought to be in danger, when he is on the midnight journey, in paths which robbers infest, or crossed by deep and rapid rivers, sweeping many an unguarded traveller from this world to the next? When is it that the wife thinks most of the husband, and the sister feels the deepest interest in the brother? Is it not when the party loved is laid on a bed of distress, or fighting with the billows of death? A love is then kindled which never burned before, and tears flow from eyes, the very fountains of which seemed to have been dried up by the scorching power of this world's anxieties. It is the very circumstance that the race is lost which awakens so deep a feeling in the breast of the Christian—a feeling accompanied with the thought that what is thus lost is precious above all price which can be set upon it, and that the recovery of it is worth any amount of labour which he can render—even as it was worth the sacrifice of the very Son of God.

CHAPTER III.

MOTIVE PRINCIPLES OF THE MIND.

SECT. I.—MOTIVE PRINCIPLES NEITHER VIRTUOUS NOR VICIOUS APPETITES AND MENTAL APPETENCIES.

We have divided the Motive Department of the mind into the Will, the Conscience, and the Emotions. Having dwelt at considerable length on the two first of these, we are now to consider the Emotions. At the basis of the emotions prompting and drawing them forth will be found Motive or Appetent Principles.

It would serve many important ends to have an exhaustive classification of the motive principles of the mind, that is, of the principles of action by which man may be led, or the ends which he may set before him in his actions. Without professing to be able to furnish such, we may point out some active principles which are evidently in the very nature and constitution of the mind. Among these we must give a high place to the propensity to seek that which is known to communicate pleasure, and avoid that which is expected to inflict pain, and this in regard either to ourselves or others. But they take a miserably defective view of man's nature who represent him as incapable of being swayed by any other motive better or worse. There is, for example, a tendency in the mind to exercise and gratify every intellectual power, natural or acquired, and to seek whatever may favour such action and indulgence. The mind is also disposed to seek what it is led to regard as beautiful. Man may, and should above all things, be influenced by the desire to secure moral good and avoid moral evil.

Besides these more general motive principles, there are particular natural appetencies which look to ends of their own, towards (to use the language of Butler) particular external things of which it hath always a particular idea or perception, towards these external things themselves, distinct from the pleasure arising from them. These are not in themselves either virtuous or vicious. But it should be noticed that they are all excellent in themselves, and in admirable adjustment to the state in which the Author of our being has placed us. Anterior to the abuse which may be made of them, they are of the most beneficent nature, and eminently fitted to promote the welfare of the individual, and of society at large. The mere possession of them, however, does not constitute any one virtuous; it proves merely the wisdom and benevolence of Him who hath planted them in our natures.

In now proceeding to consider some of these principles of action, we shall not be at pains to make a very nice or subtle analysis of them. It is possible that a refined analysis might resolve some of those about to be enunciated into simpler elements; we look at them in the obvious forms which they assume in the actual operations of the mind. It is of little consequence to the object in view, whether they be original principles, or the natural and necessary result of original principles. It is enough that they be found in the human mind, naturally and intuitively, and anterior to any exercise of the human will producing them.

I. There are the APPETITES.

"This class of our active principles," says Dugald Stewart, "is distinguished by the following circumstances:—(1.) They take their rise from the body, and are common to us with the brutes. (2.) They are not constant, but occasional. (3.) They are accompanied with an uneasy sensation, which is strong or weak, in proportion to the strength or weakness of the appetite. Our appetites are three in number—hunger, thirst, and the appetite of sex. Of these, two were intended for the preservation of the individual, the third for the continuance of the species; and without them, reason would have been insufficient for these important purposes." He adds, "Our occasional propensities to action and repose are in many respects analogous to our appetites."

Had it been our object to point out instances of design in the works of God, these appetites, connecting as they do the bodily frame, on the one hand with external physical nature, and on the other hand with the mind within, might have supplied many instructive examples. Regarding them merely as materials of government, they do still exhibit some traces of design to the reflecting mind. We see how wise and efficient the provision made for the preservation of the race. We see how the appetites compel man to be industrious and laborious, in order to obtain the food needful for their gratification; and how they render him active on the one hand, and dependent on the other. Without these appetites he would have been sluggish and inactive; or, impelled by propensities merely mental, he would have been rash in his speculations, and imprudent in his actions. They are one main instrument in the hand of God for giving steadfastness to his government, and in making man fulfil the purposes which he has to execute upon the earth.

II. There are the MENTAL APPETENCES.

(1.) *The appetence for knowledge.* This principle, in the form of curiosity, appears in children in early life, and in the most savage and primitive states of society. The unknown, the hidden, have most powerful attractions for the inquisitive spirit of man. The curious prying into a neighbour's character, and the love of news so common in villages and rural districts, show that this principle is found in the lowest grades of society. As the mind is expanded, so is this desire elevated; and it becomes the love of travelling, the love of history, the love of reading, and the love of science. The traveller encountering the most imminent perils in the burning sands of Africa or the icy regions of the poles, the scholar wasting his strength over the midnight lamp, testify how intense this desire may become in individual minds.

The more we reflect, the more must we be impressed with the extent of the influence exercised by this principle upon mankind at large. It is a great incentive to activity among individual minds, and it helps on the improvement of society. Through it the corners of the earth are brought together, and the most distant periods of the past are made to hand down instruction to the present. It brings human character under inspection, and therefore under the control of public opinion, and thus lays great restraints upon human wickedness. Take away the thirst for knowledge from the race, and you sink them beneath the savage state, and with no reasonable hope of ever elevating them.

(2.) *The appetence for esteem.* It is a principle of all but universal operation. Most men have a wish to leave a name behind them; some cutting it as it were on the rock that it may endure as long as the earth endures; others carving it as it were on the bark of a tree that it may last for years, and some writing it as on the sand, but each striving to have some memorial. "We observe," says Swift, "even among the vulgar, how fond they are to have an inscription over their grave." Some, it is true, have in their career of vice fallen beneath this motive, but few have risen above it. Some court the good opinion of the masses, and others of the select few. One man looks down with contempt upon the approbation of the poor, the illiterate, and the vulgar; but it is because he would stand high in the favour of the rich, the learned, the polite, and the accomplished. The demagogue cares not for the good opinion of the higher and more refined classes of society, and he thinks that he shows his courage in doing so; but then he is as vain as the other, for he drinks in greedily the applause of the many. Most of those whom the world worships have been the very slaves of this principle. Lord Chancellor Erskine calls it "the inherent passion of genius." Fame is an idol before whom more have bowed than before Baal or Jupiter, Brahma or Budha, or the most extensively worshipped of the gods of heathenism. The sound of human applause is heard by ears commonly regarded as most shut against it. The student hears its rising sound in his closet, and longs to bring forth from his researches a work that may swell the noise yet louder and louder. The politician and patriot listen to it in the shout of the applauding rabble, or in the whispered compliment of some more select, and, as they think, more discerning circle. The soldier hears it louder than the din of battle or the voice of the trumpet, and is prepared to follow it even over the mangled carcases of his fellow-men. It is suspected that it has not been unheard by the monk in his cell, or the nun in her cloister. The very minister of religion has heard its echoes when he is arranging his thoughts for addressing his congregation, and has difficulty in shutting his ears to it when as an ambassador he is delivering the message of mercy to sinners.

This desire does not seem to be in itself either virtuous or vicious. So far as it is not degraded by being associated with human wickedness, it serves most important purposes in the government of the world. It is one of the most potent of those principles by which, in spite of prevailing selfishness and malice, the race are banded together. It is the true source of much that we call amiability, or that spirit which leads us to study the temper, the tastes, and feelings of our fellow-men. Many of the schemes for ameliorating the condition of mankind have originated in this feeling rather than in any spirit of enlarged benevolence. Take away this intuitive principle, and many communities of mankind would become dens of wild beasts, with their interests and their passions engaging them in never-ceasing conflicts.

(3.) *The appetence for power.* This principle, which seems to exist to some extent in all minds, exercises a prodigious sway over certain minds, and may become one of the deepest passions of the human breast. It is a peculiarity of it, that, more than any other of the intuitive desires, it seems to increase with exercise and gratification, and it comes at length to seize the mind with an iron grasp. In regard to some other passions, the mind is often led to discover their vanity, and to abandon with disgust the objects pursued for years; but the love of power seems to grow with advancing years, and holds its possessor in a state of more slavish subjection than he holds those who have submitted themselves to his sway; so that every tyrant is himself ruled over by a tyranny more grasping than that which he wields over others.

Looking at this principle as it is in itself, and not in its sinful excess, it must evidently have a powerful influence in uniting mankind together. The patriarchal, the chieftain, and the monarchical systems derive much of their strength from it. It is the cement of much of the combined action that produces such mighty effects. It is seen and felt in republics, as well as in monarchies. The leader of a band of his school-companions, of a troop of youths, of a village, of a valley, of a town or country, of a powerful state party, of a cabinet or a parliament—these may all be under its sway no less effectually than the monarch upon the throne, and may each be the nucleus around which there cluster numbers who would otherwise be isolated in all their actions, and wavering and unsteady in all their movements. All unknown to the parties themselves, wave has rolled on wave to keep this world from stagnating, and all perhaps under the attracting power of some satellite, which is itself attracted to a planet rolling round a central sun. It is thus that one great central energy, one great ruling mind, has held together and swayed the destinies of kingdoms, and reached in its influence through successive generations.

(4.) *The appetence for society.* This is a propensity which man may resist under the influence of other and stronger propensities; still it is one which every human being feels. "It is not good for man to be alone." The hermit draws such praise from his admirers, just because he is resisting one of the strongest principles of our nature. Nor is it needful, in support of our argument, to plead that this love of society is a principle which cannot be resolved into anything simpler. It may very possibly be the result of other feelings, which are called forth by the very position in which man is placed. Still it cannot be doubted, that it is of spontaneous growth in the human mind, and is not the result of any voluntary and far-sighted calculations. Springing up, as it does, under the influence of natural causes, it is made to accomplish many important results. It lightens many hours that would otherwise be intolerably heavy, and perfumes, by the kindnesses which flow from it, the very atmosphere which society breathes. Hence many of the amenities of society, and the numberless offices of kind and obliging neighbourhood. It raises a smile upon many a countenance that would otherwise settle into a murky sulkiness; and calls forth many a cheerful remark, pleasant anecdote, and smart repartee, from lips that would otherwise be sealed in silence. This power may not act at large distances; but, like capillary attraction, it holds bodies that are near compactly together; and banding as it does each little circle, and the members of each little circle being connected with the neighbouring circles, it reaches in its influence over the whole of society.

(5.) *The appetence for property.* Some analysts of the human mind have resolved this principle into a modification of the love of power. Be it so, it is not the less a spontaneous product of native principles. And in whatever other element it may originate, it becomes at last an independent principle of action. In some of its forms it may appear to be about the most sordid of all human passions. But speaking of it, not in the abuse of it, but as it is in itself, it wields a most powerful influence, holding men as by gravity to this earth on which God has placed them. In some of its aspects, nothing can be more irrational than to toil for years, as many do, for property which is never to be enjoyed, and from which they must speedily be separated. Still the very habit has given steadiness of aim and a spirit of caution to individual minds, and the general issue is the accumulation of wealth, with the powers which wealth puts in operation. More beneficial still, there are the refinements and the elegances which wealth produces, and the conservatist feeling which the existence of valuable property spreads throughout the more influential portion of the community. Satirists may ridicule wealth as they please, and describe the poorest nations as the happiest; still it cannot be denied that accumulated property tends to produce an elegance and a social order which cannot be found in communities stricken with poverty and constantly striving about the very necessaries of existence.

Now, these appetites and appetences are among the most influential of the principles by which human nature is governed. The will may erect upon them, or by them, a calculating self-love which strives to obtain as much enjoyment as possible, or a habitual benevolence which deliberately seeks the good of others; but it is by the primary impulses fully as much as by the secondary principles of self-love and benevolence, that mankind are induced to maintain an outward decency of deportment, and society at large is made to clothe itself in becoming decorum. Some of these principles give life, movement, and onward progress to society, and others impart to it strength and endurance. Some act with a springing, elastic force, and others have a gravitating power. Some tend to disjoin what ought to be separated, and others to band together the things which should be united. The implanting of these principles—diverse from one another, and yet all tending to the same end—shows how admirable is the provision made for the social order of the world.

Yet so far as mankind are under the influence of these principles they are neither virtuous nor the opposite. It is to be remembered, however, that the very possession of these intuitions, like the possession of high intellectual qualities, brings along with it additional responsibility, and, when they are abused, additional guilt.

SECT. II.—THE EMOTIONS AND AFFECTIONS.

The Emotions are called forth by the Motive Principles, spoken of in last section. It is of some moment to establish this.

First, we would have it observed, that in every emotion there is a mental representation, or apprehension of an object. This conception is the substance from which feeling is exhaled as fragrance is from the rose or lily—it is the body, of which feeling is as it were the accompanying atmosphere. Thus when hope is kindled, there is the apprehension of an object as about to bring good to us ; when fear is roused, there is the representation of an object as about to produce evil. Emotions are thus dependent on the mental representations to which they are attached ; though it is to be carefully observed that they are something more, as consciousness clearly attests, than the mental conception upon which, as well as upon the general train of association, they exercise a powerful influence. The Author of our nature in making the conception of certain objects emotional, has added vastly to man's capacity for enjoyment, and has provided for himself a powerful instrument of government. But all conceptions are not accompanied with emotion ;—and the question arises, what are the objects or the conceptions of objects which are so ? This leads us to remark—

Secondly, the conceptions which raise emotions are of objects which gratify or disappoint the motive principles of the mind natural or acquired. Nothing raises emotion except the contemplation of an object bearing a reference to them : every object conceived as furthering or frustrating these motive ends raises less or more of feeling. We have in a previous part of this treatise (p. 266) pointed out the peculiarities of emotions ; they are characterized by attachment or repugnance and excitement. All objects gratifying the motive propensities call forth attachment, whereas all objects which seem to thwart them are viewed with aversion, and all such attachments and aversions put the mind in an excited state. The objects thus appetible or the reverse are regarded by the mind as good or evil—and these phrases may be applied to them in a loose sense, and provided they are not understood as implying anything moral or immoral, It is always to be remembered that above these motive principles and emotive attachments, we have the conscience, whose office it is to say when they should be gratified, and when they should be restrained, and also the will to decide between competing impulses or between inclination and duty.

We are to consider the emotions exclusively under one aspect, that is, as means of government. As viewing them in this light the common divisions or classifications will not suit our purpose, and so we are necessitated in the notice we take of them to form an arrangement of our own. These emotions, like the other instruments employed by God, physical and moral, contemplate two ends, one of incitement and encouragement, and another of restraint and arrest. The emotions may all be viewed under this double aspect. To every emotion of the one class, there is a corresponding emotion of the other class. Thus—

(1.) Some are INSTIGATIVE, and others ARRESTIVE ; (2.) some are ADHESIVE, and others REPULSIVE ; (3.) some are REMUNERATIVE, and others PUNITIVE ; (4.) some are RESPONSIVE TO JOY, and others RESPONSIVE TO SORROW ; (5.) some raise ÆSTHETIC ADMIRATION, others a SENSE OF REPUGNANCE.

I. There are the emotions which arise from the contemplation of possible or probable evil or good, they are THE ARRESTIVE AND INSTIGATIVE. The conception of evil, as about to come upon us, leads to apprehension, fear, dread, terror, according to the greatness or probability of the evil. This is in itself an agitating frame of mind, and so rouses the mind from lethargy ; and, like all emotions, it quickens the train of thought clustering round the object, and thus suggests means of escape from the apprehended peril. The apprehension of good as about to be conferred, on the other hand, leads to hope and expectation ; and the buoyancy of spirit produced prompts us to use the means required in order to procure the contemplated good, and helps to prepare for its reception. To the same class are to be referred, as partaking of the nature both of the arrestive and instigative, those emotions of astonishment, surprise, and wonder which arise on the contemplation of new, unexpected, and strange phenomena, and in regard to which the mind is not aware, for a time, whether they may be for good or evil. The emotions now named tend to summon the attention, and to brace the mind to meet the emergency. We owe to the arrestive feelings much of the caution which prevails among mankind, with all the hardy virtues which grow upon caution. We owe to the instigative feelings a large portion of human energy and activity. One-half of man's exertions, and more than one-half of his happiness, proceed from hope. Where there is hope, there will generally be some life ; when hope ceases, action also ceases. God in his administration employs both these classes of emotions ; by the one, he can cast at particular times, as at the time of a plague, for instance, a gloom accompanied with utter helplessness over the minds of a whole community ; and by the other, send forth half a continent, as was done in the times of the Crusades, on some great enterprise.

II. There are those which arise from the contemplation of persons and objects as supposed to possess good qualities, they are THE ADHESIVE AND REPULSIVE. In such cases the mind experiences a delight in the contemplation of the object, and specially in the presence of the object as fitted to make that contemplation more vivid, and also a tendency to cling to that object. Opposed to these feelings we have another class, leading us to abhor and turn away from certain objects, as supposed to possess evil qualities : they are the feelings of aversion and hatred. When we are led to contemplate persons as having conferred favours upon us, we are inclined towards them by a feeling which, if not gratitude, (for gratitude, as implying wish, is a virtue,) is often the incentive to gratitude. When we contemplate them, on the other hand, as inflicting injury upon us, we are led to repel them from us or to flee from them : and the emotions that arise are anger, indignation, and such-like feelings, no way sinful if unaccompanied with sinful desires. Every moralist has observed how admirable the provision which is made through these instinctive affections for the instant repulsion, and so the prevention of injuries. The feeling arms the mind on the instant with weapons, and provides it with resources to check or throw back the evil, when cool reflection might be too slow or too feeble in its operations. It has often been noticed, as another beautiful provision, that all the benign affections are pleasant at the time, while all the malign affections are unpleasant ; and by this means, as well as by many others, God would lead us to cherish the former, and to expel the latter as soon as possible. Revenge, even when successful, has within it its own punishment—a revenge of the revenge. The Greeks represent Medea as successful in wrapping the bride of whom she was jealous in a burning robe; but, to show the nature of her enjoyment in consequence, she is spoken of as going off in a chariot of serpents—no unfit emblem of the feelings which accompany gratified resentment.

III. There are the feelings which spring up on the CONTEMPLATION OF ENJOYMENT AND DISAPPOINTMENT. They might be called the remunerative and punitive, provided these phrases could be used as implying nothing moral, but merely as indicating that these emotions are the results of steps that have gone before. They are the emotions which arise on the contemplation of the good or the evil as already attained. They are such emotions as gladness, joy, and complacency on the one hand, and grief and depression on the other. They compose a large portion of the enjoyment which the good, so long expected, it may be, confers, and a large portion of the miseries which the loss entails. They constitute the mental elevation and the mental depression to which success and disappointment conduct. They become, in consequence, among the most potent of the instruments of the Divine government.

IV. There are the emotions which beat RESPONSIVE TO THE JOYS AND SORROWS. Man is so constituted that he experiences emotion not only when he contemplates good and evil as accruing to himself, but good and evil as accruing to others. This is one of the most beneficent parts of his constitution. This sympathy is a powerful means of lessening sorrow and increasing happiness. "A friend," says Jeremy Taylor, "shares my sorrow, and makes it but a moiety; but he swells my joy, and makes it double. For so two channels divide the river and lessen it into rivulets, and make it fordable, and apt to be drunk up at the first revels of the Syrian star; but two torches do not divide but increase the flame; and though my tears are the sooner dried up, when they run upon my friend's cheeks in the furrows of compassion, yet when my flame hath kindled his lamp, we unite the glories, and make them radiant like the golden candlesticks that burn before the throne of God, because they shine by numbers, by unions, and confederations of light and joy." It is a bountiful provision that in ordinary cases sympathy with sorrow is vastly more intense than sympathy with joy. The joy can do with or without the sympathy, but the sorrow needs and demands the sympathy to alleviate the grief, or stir up action which may remove the cause of it.

V. There are the ÆSTHETIC FEELINGS, WHETHER OF ADMIRATION OR AVERSION. The love of the beautiful, of the picturesque and sublime, does not seem to be very strong or sensitive in rude states of society or in uncultivated minds. To such, the taste, if keen and active, must have been a source of pain more than of pleasure, for there could have been little time for its gratification. Still, even to such, there are scenes and objects which possess a deep interest—such as the grassy slope, the fertile plain, the flowing river, and the cheerful and smiling countenance. But among persons blessed with leisure and learning, this affection becomes very powerful, and embraces a far wider range of objects. As the order that is in nature leads us to put trust in it, so these æsthetic emotions lead us to love it, to delight in it; and we become attached to certain objects, animate and inanimate, because of the feelings which they raise up in our bosoms. It is pleasant to observe that, while there is a general correspondence of taste among all, there are important differences, inasmuch as different individuals admire different objects. Opposed to the emotions of admiration, there seem to be feelings of repugnance; but these latter are comparatively weak, and seem to be intended to keep us from dwelling amid the more ignoble and deleterious parts of nature. The feelings of admiration, on the other hand, tend to make us observe and linger among the more important works of God, and are one most powerful means of leading mankind to cultivate a propriety and decorum of demeanour.*

But we cannot understand the nature of the affections and passions by merely looking at the individual emotions. One of the most wonderful characteristics of the emotions, in our apprehension, is their power over the train of thought. The affections and passions do not consist so much of single emotions, as of trains of emotions, or of trains of thought, all of an emotional kind. The pleasing affections consist of a succession of ripples, the passions of a succession of gusts and waves; and in both there is apt to be a tidal ebb and flow. Whenever the mind is deeply moved, there is a tumult of thoughts and feelings, crowding like a mob round a point; and yet often, like that mob, scarcely able to tell what is bringing them together. It is this tendency to run in a train which renders these emotions among the chief sources of human happiness and human misery, and about the highest reward of the well-regulated, and the most fearful punishment of the ill-regulated mind.

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* A full enumeration of the emotions should include at this place the Moral Emotions; but these have been discussed in a previous chapter, (pp 302-306.)

We have entered so far upon the examination of the emotions, to show how fitted they are to become instruments of government. Like aëriform bodies, they are elastic—admitting of great extension, and great compression; and also all-penetrating, and admitting of great rapidity of action. They are seen to be especially powerful, when we reflect that God can employ the physical world, in correspondence with these internal feelings, to turn mankind as he pleases, in spite of their rebellion and folly.

But we must be careful, in speaking of these emotions or affections, to distinguish between them and the attached consent, wishes, and volitions of the mind. These emotions do commonly lead to wishes and desires; but wishes and desires are always something more than mere emotions, and may be virtuous or vicious, which mere emotions never are in themselves. And this distinction enables us to settle the question, so often discussed, as to the virtuousness or the sinfulness of the natural affections. None of them is either the one or the other in itself; nor can there be any moral element, till they stir up desire, or at least secure the consent of the will. Do our attachments lead, as they are intended, to true benevolence?—then the complex affection is virtuous; but it is so because it contains benevolence. Do the repulsive passions stir up, as they too frequently do in man's disordered nature, revengeful wishes?—then they become sinful from that instant. In every case, the moral good or the evil lies not in the affection itself, but in its accompanying desire or volition. So far as the emotions are disconnected with virtuous or sinful wishes and voluntary determinations, they have no moral character whatever, but are mere instruments employed in the Divine administration. Yet how much of human virtue, so called, consists in the mere possession of the benign emotions! Alas! how much of moral evil, properly so called, consists in the abuse of these parts of our admirable constitution! Indeed all actual sin seems to consist in voluntarily allowing, following, or exciting motive principles condemned in that particular exercise by the law of God.*

SECT. III.—GOVERNING PRINCIPLES THAT ARE EVIL.

We are now entering on topics of considerable difficulty and delicacy. Some sensitive minds shrink from the anatomy to which we are to subject human motives, and the manner in which, in our dissection, we must lay bare the muscles and organs of human life. But bold spirits have entered this region, and drawn from it the most pernicious doctrine, and we must follow them, were it only to counteract the evil use which they have made of their observations.

In this inquiry, great care must be taken, first, not to make God chargeable with the evil principles, which serve a useful purpose in the government of the world; and, secondly, to show, that though there may be beneficial ends served by the sinful affection or principle, the guilt of the agent is not thereby diminished.

There is a constant tendency in the present day to fall into the latter of these errors. Crimes are discovered to be links in the chain of causes on which hang good and glorious results; and, in approving of the issue, historians have sometimes been inclined to justify all the steps which have led to it. One class of writers, delighted with the order, the peace, and physical comfort found under some despotical governments, have been led to transfer their praises to the very acts of tyranny and cruelty which have been instrumental in producing such blessings. Another class, observing how political convulsions have led to great social improvements, have been tempted to excuse the pretension, deceit, and violence employed to ferment the popular mind. Some of those writers who profess to be elevated above all prejudice, in the way of showing their affected candour, have allowed the issue of actions to influence their moral sentiments, and have forgotten that virtue is virtue, and that vice is vice, independently of the incidental results flowing from them. Literature is never engaged in a work more unbecoming its high functions, than when it is shedding a halo around successful crime, or disparaging the excellence of humble and unsuccessful merit. Arnold asks "whether the Christian ever feels more keenly awake to the purity of the spirit of the gospel, than when he reads the history of crimes related with no sense of their evil." Never is history fulfilling its high office so appropriately as when it is stripping splendid vice of its false colours, and calling attention to the flower which would otherwise bloom in the shade, unnoticed by the vulgar eye.

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* Certain moralists have got themselves confused in their estimate of man, by observing that moral evil lies in the abuse of principles good in themselves. They give to man all the credit of the good principle, and excuse the evil on the ground that the motive principle in itself is good. But they forget that the instinctive principles of action, while good in this sense, that they have a beneficial tendency, do not imply any moral good on the part of the possessor, unless a good action of the will has attached itself to them. The sin consists in an act of the will permitting or causing that which God has made good to become evil. It has been said that man cannot, in his greatest violence of wickedness, desire moral evil as moral evil, but for some ulterior end. Be it so, that God has so fenced human nature by this limitation of instinctive motive principles, it is certain that man does all he can in wickedness, for he allows and chooses moral evil, knowing it to be evil, as a means of gratifying inferior motives.

But while history and philosophy must specially guard against the prepossessions which fortune instils, they are most assuredly at liberty to contemplate and to weigh the good effects which will at times flow from actions evil in themselves. While they denounce in no measured language the perpetrators of the crimes, let them praise the administration of God, who can bring good out of evil, and control such rebellious elements. Meanwhile, we observe what is the nature of the pillars on which the world destined to destruction is supported, and what fearful effects must follow when God's purposes are finished with them, and these pillars are taken down.

(1.) Attention was called, in a former section, to the beneficial effects following from the intuitive desires, which are neither virtuous nor vicious in themselves. Let us now contemplate the results when these principles are abused and become vicious.

In themselves, all the actions which proceed from such perverted desires are evil. No attempt should be made to defend them on the ground of their consequences. To palliate them is to palliate sin. To approve of them is to partake of their guilt. Yet every one sees, that in this sinful world there are certain effects which are good in themselves, following from vanity and ambition. Take away these incentives to action, and it is impossible to calculate how much earthly excellence would be taken away, or rather to say how little would remain. "All the works of human industry are, in a great measure, referable to ambition of some sort, that, however humble it may seem to minds of prouder views, is yet relatively as strong as the ambition of the proudest. We toil that we may have some little influence, or some little distinction, however small the number of our inferiors may be."* We are not denying the existence of genuine philanthropy ; it requires, however, but a very little acquaintance with the lives of poets, statesmen, artists, warriors, and philosophers too, to gather from the motives which they avow, that, but for the praise of men, and the influence expected to be obtained, they would not have made such sacrifices or practised such self-denial, and the world would not have reaped from their labours the benefit which has accrued.

The advantages arising from frugality, and this even when it assumes the form of avarice, have been pointed out by the father of political economy. "Parsimony," he says, "by increasing the fund which is destined for the maintenance of productive hands, tends to increase the number of those hands, whose labour adds to the value of the subject on which it is bestowed. It tends, therefore, to increase the exchangeable value of the annual produce of the land and labour of the country. It puts into motion an additional quantity of industry, which gives an additional value to the annual produce."† Such are its effects in an economic point of view ; and its influence in spreading a spirit of caution, prudence, industry, temperance, and foresight, throughout a community, are not less salutary. The virtues of poorer nations, and of the labouring classes, are all intimately connected with that frugality on which parents set so high a value, and which they are accustomed to recommend to their children.

But it has not been observed by Dr. Adam Smith, that in the overruling providence of God beneficial effects also follow from the opposite spirit, that of prodigality. "It is quite obvious," says Malthus, "that the principle of saving pushed to excess would destroy the motive to production. If every person were satisfied with the simplest food, the poorest clothing, and the meanest houses, it is certain that no other sort of food and clothing would be in existence; and as there would be no adequate motive to the proprietors of land to cultivate well, not only the wealth derived from convenience and luxuries would be quite at an end, but, if the same divisions of land continued, the production of food would be prematurely checked, and population would come to a stand, long before the soil had been cultivated."* It has not been observed, either by Smith or Malthus, that it is by the free operation of both that national wealth is promoted. The latter, indeed, speaks of an intermediate point, at which the "encouragement to the increase of wealth is the greatest." But truly it is not by this happy medium that the economic prosperity of a nation is fostered, so much as by giving full liberty to both extremes; and the issue is, that capital is accumulated by the frugality of one section of the community, and is again lavished on productive labour by the prodigality of another. These centripetal and centrifugal forces are held in balance by the nice arrangements of the providence of God, and according as the one or other prevails, so is the path which a nation describes—so is it planet-like or comet-like in its orbit. We see how a nation may owe its commercial and political prosperity, not so much to the wisdom of its statesmen or citizens, as to the skilful adjustments of the government of God.

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* Brown's Lectures, Lect. lxviii.

† Wealth of Nations, B. III. c. iii.

These remarks apply to the abuse of all the instinctive springs of action in the human breast, and it is not needful to treat of them in order. The love of society, for example, while it encourages extravagance, and often leads to bankruptcy, gives rise meanwhile to those pleasing qualities which are expressively called social. The ages and nations which have been most addicted to sociality, as England in the reign of Charles II., and France in the reign of Louis XIV., have also been characterized by their politeness, and the flow of pleasing conversation.

(2.) Nay, there are incidental advantages springing from the malignant passions, under some of the aspects in which they present themselves. No doubt, these passions would be unmingled evils in a world in which sin was otherwise unknown. In the actual world they are also evils; but then, to keep wickedness from becoming intolerable, the evils are made to counteract each other, as, in another department of God's works, one species of insect and wild beast is made to destroy another.

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* Political Economy, p. 8.

In a world in which intentional ill-usage and injustice were unknown, the passions of anger and resentment would have been useless, or worse than useless. But it cannot be denied, that in the real world the resentful passions are often the means of scaring persons from the infliction of injury, when higher principle could have accomplished no such end. Full of injustice as this world is, insults and injuries would have been much more frequent, but for the instinctive passion which is ready to rise up and redress the wrong. Sinful though private feuds, duels, and the majority of wars have been, it is evident, notwithstanding, that they have been the means of checking other evils which would have spread inextricable disorder throughout society. True it is that this circumstance does not lessen the sinfulness of the evil passion, nor does it show that other and innocent and far more effectual restraints might not have been laid on these evils, than are laid by instruments which in themselves are evil; yet it proves, that while the government of God does not create either evil, it uses one evil to restrain another.

We have often been struck, in reading the narrative of the Old Testament, to find one wicked man employed to punish another. This feature of the Divine government comes out, very strikingly, in the declining age of the history of the Hebrews, and more particularly of the ten tribes. Jeroboam is employed to punish the house of David; Omri, in a later age, is raised up to punish the house of Jeroboam; while Jehu appears at an opportune time, to avenge the evil wrought by Omri and his descendant Ahab. The method is observable throughout the whole economy of God's providence, as revealed in the sacred volume. Egypt, Nineveh, Babylon, and Persia, are made the instruments of punishing the Jews, and themselves are punished for the evil which they wrought. We have at times wondered at this, and felt as if there was something in it which seemed to reflect on the Divine government. But then, we observe the same method in operation in the world around us; and we have only to consider, that as God is no way participating in the guilt of parties who are left entirely to their own freedom, so he is no way implicated in their conduct by the use to which he turns it.

Envy itself, though among the basest and most malignant of human passions, has served certain purposes of restraint. Not that we would excuse, much less defend, this mean passion. It withers under the sunshine of another's prosperity, and ever springs up most luxuriantly upon decayed fortunes, and the wrecks of blasted reputations. It wounds, with its serpent tongue, the very fairest forms of earthly greatness. The lovelier the flower, it is the more eager to light upon it. Yet it cannot be doubted that, evil as it is, it has counteracted evils which would otherwise have hurried away individuals and society at large into the extremest folly. There is ground for the name which Crabbe represents flattery as giving to it when he calls it "virtue's jealous friend." It is a means of checking the love of fame on the part of individuals, and of the admiration of great men on the part of the public, when these might become excessive. It may be argued, too, that without such a principle operating as a check, the vain, the forward, and the audacious, would, by means of hypocrisy and pretence, delude mankind into the greatest extravagance and follies. It would be vastly better, no doubt, that these pretensions were checked by the good sense and high moral feeling of the community; but in the absence of these, envy has been serviceable in accomplishing the same end. Of use in detecting simulated, it is also of service in increasing real excellence; and it makes the truly great man still greater, inasmuch as it compels him to cultivate habitual circumspection, and prompts to farther exertion when he might be induced to give himself over to indolence, as the gadfly buzzing round the ox rouses him from his lethargy, when he would recline too long under the shade. It is not unworthy of being observed, that those who have their character fully established rise at last far above the reach of detraction. The great man is like the luminary of day, which, as it circles above the horizon, pales the wax tapers which before shed their feeble light; for a time they cast their blackening shadows; but as he rises higher and higher, all the shadows vanish. Some persons may be inclined farther to assert, that envy is so far advantageous, inasmuch as, attacking only prosperity, "while misery passed unstung away,"* it so far equalizes the inequalities of external fortune.

There is no one who does not lament the prevalence of evil-speaking under its various forms. Every one has seen its fatal effects, for it reigns among all classes, from our rural districts and retired hamlets, up to the circles of the nobility and the court of the sovereign. Yet who can tell how many incipient vices have been checked by this scandal, or the salutary dread of it? In this wicked world, it sometimes serves the same purpose as those insects which are the scavengers of nature—it prevents society from becoming intolerably corrupt and putrid. It would be infinitely better, no doubt, could mankind be induced to avoid the appearance of evil through a becoming fear of the evil itself, or by a discerning and wholesome tone of public sentiment; but when these are wanting, jealousy may serve a good end, even when it is far from being pure in its motives, or select in the means which it employs. Meanwhile, the virtuous man must be deterred from the evil by higher principles, and be on his guard against countenancing the scandal, even when he sees that beneficial effects may be produced by it.

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* Crabbe.

Another subject of general lamentation is the evil produced by party spirit in politics and religion. Lord Brougham, in a well-known passage, supposes all the statesmen of last century arranged before us as in a picture-gallery, and a stranger coming to survey them. "Here," would that stranger say, "stand the choicest spirits of their age, the greatest wits, the noblest orators, the wisest politicians, and the most illustrious patriots." "Here stand all these 'lights of the world and demigods of fame;' but here they stand, not ranged on one side of this gallery, having served a common country. With the same bright object in view, their efforts were divided, not united. They fiercely combated with each other, and did not together assail the common foe. Their great exertions were bestowed, their more than mortal forces were expended, not in furthering the general good, not in resisting their country's enemies, but in conflicts among themselves; and all their triumphs were won over each other, and all their sufferings were endured at each other's hands." The Rev. J. A. James quotes this passage, and adds, that the stranger, in surveying the portraits of our theologians, polemics, authors, and preachers, would be compelled to endure the same painful surprise, and indulge in the same sorrowful reflections.

And no one should allow himself to palliate this spirit, proceeding from the most selfish and ungenerous feelings in the human breast. Nor is any one entitled to affirm that, though incidental benefit has arisen from it, far higher good would not have sprung from the cherishing of an opposite spirit. It could be demonstrated, we think, that the spirit of love would have produced far greater good than the spirit of party, and this a good unmixed with accompanying evil. Still, we must shut our eyes to facts which are every day forcing themselves upon our notice, if we deny that in the existing world, partisanship in politics, and sectarianism in religion, have been made to serve important purposes in the prevention of evil, and the instigation of what is positively good. But for the existence of such a spirit, patriotism would often have languished and died, and persons in possession of power would have been allured onward to acts of most atrocious tyranny. The sifting investigation to which public measures are subjected, arises sometimes from the jealous temper with which parties watch each other, rather than from disinterested patriotism. The history of the Church shows how activity among the clergy, and a spirit of reading, inquiry, and reflection, among the great mass of the people, have been produced and fostered by the clashing of opposing sects, when deeper principle and higher feeling might have proved utterly ineffectual.

SECT. IV.—INFLUENCE EXERCISED BY THESE PRINCIPLES IN BIASSING THE CONSCIENCE.

The attention of the philosophic mind of modern Europe was first called to the class of phenomena now to be examined, by Hume, more particularly in his famous Dialogue appended to the Treatise on Virtue. The train of observation has been followed, too, by Adam Smith, in his Theory of Moral Sentiments, and reappears once or twice in his Wealth of Nations. It is prosecuted by Macaulay, with his usual splendour of thought and diction, in his remarks on Macchiavelli, and is fondly dwelt on by several other writers of our age.

We may first take a view of the phenomena noticed by these acute writers, and then point out the proper use to be made of them. In this, as in many other particulars, Hume has been guiding, in a manner much to be deplored, the thinking mind of our countrymen. It is needful to rectify the conclusions rashly drawn from a class of facts, the existence of which cannot be denied.

It is a fact, explain it as we please, that men's moral judgments are swayed by the supposed beneficial or prejudicial consequences of actions. The mother at Athens murdered her child rather than expose it through life to poverty and growing hardship. The Indian drowns his mother in the Ganges, the Caffre exposes her by some fountain, and they justify their conduct on the ground that it is better she should thus perish than drag out a protracted life of misery. The Greeks and Romans defended the practice of suicide, and argued that life should terminate when it ceases to be useful. The modern gentleman thinks it nothing improper to fight a duel, and tells us that it is only by such a practice that a nice sense of honour can be maintained. The Frenchman of the days of Louis XIV. prided himself on his gay and gallant behaviour, on his liberty or licentiousness, as necessary to the production of the easy and lively manners which prevailed at that period.

Dr. Adam Smith, opening up another vein in the same mine, has shown how fortune, utility, custom, and fashion, have all their influence on the sentiments of approbation and disapprobation.* He shows how the "effect of the influence of fortune is first to diminish our sense of the merit or demerit of those actions which arise from the most laudable or blamable intentions, when they fail of producing their proposed effects; and, secondly, to increase our sense of the merit or demerit of actions, beyond what is due to the motives or affections from which they proceed, when they accidentally give occasion either to pleasure or pain." "The superiority of virtues and talents has not, even upon those who acknowledge that superiority, the same effect as the superiority of achievements." "The agreeable or disagreeable effects of actions often throw a shadow of merit or demerit upon the agent, though in his intention there was nothing that deserved either praise or blame, or at least that deserved them in the degree in which we are apt to bestow them. Thus, even the messenger of bad news is disagreeable to us, and, on the contrary, we feel a sort of gratitude to the man who brings us good tidings." He shows how custom and fashion influence our moral sentiments. "Those who have been educated in what is really good company, not what is commonly called such, who have been accustomed to see nothing in the persons whom they esteemed and lived with, but justice, modesty, humanity, and good order, are more shocked with whatever seems to be inconsistent with the rules which these virtues prescribe. Those, on the contrary, who have had the misfortune to be brought up amidst violence, licentiousness, falsehood, and injustice, lose, though not all sense of the impropriety of such conduct, yet all sense of its dreadful enormity, or of the vengeance and punishment due to it." "In certain ages, as in those of Charles II., a degree of licentiousness was associated with generosity, sincerity, magnanimity, and loyalty, while correctness of demeanour is connected with cant, cunning, hypocrisy, and low manners. Hence the vices of the great come to be copied, as associated with politeness, elegance, and generosity. From this same cause proceed those requisitions which we make in reference to professional character, insisting on a clergyman that he be grave, austere, and correct; and reckoning the spirit and bravery of the soldier an excuse for his licentiousness and dissipation. The relative value set upon virtues, and the disapprobation of vices, among different classes of society, all proceed from the same source. Among savages and barbarians, hardiness or superiority to fatigue and pain, and an affected indifference to the softer feelings and sensibilities of the heart, as they are among the most useful, so they are among the most exalted of the virtues. In civilized societies, on the other hand, the virtues of humanity are more respected, and full play is given to the gentler affections of the heart. Hence, too, the virtues and vices that are characteristic of different ranks of life." "The vices of levity are always ruinous to the common people; and a single week's thoughtlessness and dissipation is often sufficient to ruin a poor workman for ever, and to drive him, through despair, upon committing the most enormous crimes. The wiser and better sort of common people, therefore, have always the utmost abhorrence of the vices of levity and excess, while they commend the strict and austere virtues. On the other hand, among the upper classes, luxury, wanton and even disorderly mirth, the pursuit of pleasure to some degree of intemperance, the breach of chastity, at least in one of the two sexes, &c., as being less ruinous, are treated with a good deal of indulgence."*

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* See Theory of Moral Sentiments, P. ii. sect. iii., P. iv., P. v. chap. ii.

Mr. Macaulay has avowedly borrowed from the Scotch metaphysicians, and has used their observations to explain the different standards of character found in different nations.* Among the nations north of the Alps, valour was absolutely needful in order to self-defence, and hence courage came to be ranked among the highest of the virtues, and was supposed to excuse ambition, rapacity, and cruelty—and cowardice to be branded with the foulest reproach ; while all the vices belonging to timid dispositions, such as fraud and hypocrisy, hollow friendship and violated faith, came to be objects of abhorrence. Among the Italians, on the other hand, everything was done by superiority of intelligence ; and they came to regard with lenity those crimes which require self-command, address, quick observation, fertile invention, and profound knowledge of human nature. Much the same difference seems to have existed between the Greeks and Romans in the ages in which they first came into contact—and hence the contempt which each party felt for the virtues which the other commended. "Such," says Mr. Macaulay, " are the opposite errors which men commit when their morality is not a science but a taste, when they abandon eternal principles for accidental associations."

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* Wealth of Nations, Book v. chap. i.

We perceive that, in a recent work, the same general observation is employed to explain and excuse the quibbling of the Greek sophists—it was as useful, the author thinks, as the pleading of modern barristers ; and also to defend that understood principle of Greek law which required the accuser in a criminal case to avow that he was actuated by personal feeling —it was, it seems, that he might not be reckoned an officious informer.†

Such is the train of observation pursued at length by these writers—very much to the disgust, let it be added, of many ingenuous and sincere though perhaps over-sensitive minds, who feel as if the remarks offered were intended to palliate sin, and remove the landmarks which separate vice from virtue. In consequence of the use which has thus been made of them, many have turned away with as much loathing as George III. did from everything that savours of Scotch metaphysics.

Still it cannot be doubted that the above are real phenomena. To deny them is to refuse to hear the voice of history, or to open our eyes on the scenes which are constantly pressing themselves on the attention. We cannot avoid observing them, but as we do so, let us endeavour to give the right explanation, and rescue them from the improper use made of them.

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* Macaulay's Essays—Macchiavelli.

† See Lewes' Biographical History of Philosophy.

Holding, then, as we do, that there is an indelible distinction between virtue and vice, we maintain that there could have been no such perversions of the moral faculty in a mind perfectly pure and spotless. The conscience needs only to be enlightened and enlivened to condemn the perversions into which it has fallen in its state of deadness and ignorance. Like the plaintiff who appealed from Philip inattentive to Philip attentive, we can appeal from the conscience misled to the conscience rectified, and the latter will announce, that no excuse should be offered for the manner in which it has been perverted under the influence of sinful and blinding passion or prejudice.

In a former chapter, we have pointed out the way in which the conscience is deluded. A concrete fact is presented under a partial aspect, and it pronounces its judgment according to the representation made to it. This representation, or rather misrepresentation, is made, directly or indirectly, by the influence of a rebellious will—the true seat of all moral evil. It is only by the help of such a principle that we can, on the one hand, uphold the rectitude of the decisions of the moral faculty, and, on the other hand, admit that in fact many of them are prejudiced and perverted.

There is abundant room for the interference of the prejudices of the heart in the representations which are given to the conscience of our own actions and the actions of our neighbours, whenever they are closely connected with our self-interest, our favourite habits, our social, sympathetic, and benevolent feelings. The father, unable or unwilling to support the child who is yet beloved of him, the child indisposed to expose himself to privations on account of his aged parents, will lend his ear to those suggestions which would allure him to commit an act which, when regarded under a particular aspect, may seem commendable, but which the mind would utterly abhor, if discerned under all its aspects. That it is really such a prejudice which is swaying the judgment, is evident from the circumstance, that in those countries in which females are disparaged, children of that sex, and they alone, are in the way of being exposed. We see, too, how, by the same peculiarity of our nature, fortune and utility must influence the moral judgments. The fairer features of actions useful to ourselves or others, these, and these alone, are presented to the mind, which proceeds in consequence to applaud the actions. Deeds which are in themselves vicious come to be popular, and regarded, if not with positive commendation, at least without any abhorrence, because associated with certain pleasing feelings or beneficial results which have flowed from them. All this does not show, as Hume would argue, that virtue consists in utility ; it merely shows that *a strong feeling of utility*, like a strong feeling of passion, may influence the moral faculty, and make it pronounce a sentence which it would not have pronounced had it not been so biassed.

But reprobating, as we ever must, these perversions of our moral nature, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact, that they have been overruled in many cases so as to bind communities together. Every man complains of the influence which fortune, and even custom and fashion, exercise upon the moral sentiments; and we would not complain of these complaints; they originate in the moral sense, and they tend most effectually to check a flagrant sin. But while the influence of such baser considerations upon the sentiments which should be elevated far above them is in itself evil, it may become the occasion of good. A high tone of moral sentiment in a community, it is true, might have been the cause of infinitely greater good ; still the good which can be brought out of that which is in itself evil, is patent to all. Adam Smith* has a whole chapter on the final cause of that irregularity in man's nature, by which fortune comes to influence our sentiments of approbation and disapprobation. " Everybody agrees to the general maxim, that as the event does not depend on the agent, it ought to have no influence upon our sentiments with regard to the merit or propriety of his conduct. But when we come to particulars, we find that our sentiments are scarce, in one instance, exactly conformable to what this equitable maxim would direct." This very irregularity, he proceeds to show, has promoted the welfare of the species ; he should have said, in the absence of higher principle, has been the occasion of good. " Man must not be satisfied with indolent benevolence, nor fancy himself the friend of mankind, because in his heart he wishes well to the prosperity of the world." "Nature has taught him, that neither himself nor mankind can be fully satisfied with his conduct, nor bestow upon it the full measure of applause, unless he has actually produced the ends which it is the purpose of his being to advance." "It is even of considerable importance, that the evil which is done without design should be regarded as a misfortune to the doer as well as the sufferer." "As in the ancient heathen religion, that holy ground which had been consecrated to some god was not to be trod upon but upon solemn and necessary occasions, and the man who had even ignorantly violated it became piacular from that moment, and, until proper atonement should be made, incurred the vengeance of that powerful and invisible being to whom it had been set apart; so, by the wisdom of nature, the happiness of every innocent man is in the same manner rendered holy, consecrated round about against the approaches of every other man, not to be wantonly trod upon, not even to be in any respect ignorantly and involuntarily violated, without requiring some atonement in proportion to the greatness of such undesigned violation."

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* Moral Sentiments, P. ii. sect. ii.

From the same irregularity, or, as we would rather call it, perversion of sentiment, there proceeds the excessive regard paid by certain individuals, or by certain grades of society, ages, or nations, to those virtues which happen to chime in with the prevailing tastes, or to be immediately subservient to the interests of the parties. Prudence, outward decency, and caution, a spirit of frugality and industry, come to be commended among certain classes, as if they were all that was required to render the possessor's character pleasing in the sight of God; while, in other grades of life, a spirit of liberality and courage is supposed to make atonement for every vice. Hence, too, the popularity which attaches to certain qualities which are evil in themselves, because supposed to be the concomitants, and therefore the indications, of pleasing or useful virtues. While we cannot, without partaking of the sin, commend this spirit, we may observe how it has been one great means of fostering the temperance, the frugality, and the industry which so distinguish certain walks of life, and the spirit of generosity and valour, the chivalry, the romance, and heroism which have been so beneficial in certain stages of society. We may deplore the absence of higher and deeper principle ; but we cannot help admiring, that in the absence of such, the world is kept from sinking into intolerable degradation, and helped forward in the onward march of civilisation, by evils being made to counteract prevailing evils, and harmony being produced by notes in themselves discordant.

Having resolved these phenomena into the perversions of conscience, we are enabled to class along with them, and under the same head, those superstitious fears which have exercised so extensive a power upon mankind. A superstitious terror has been the means of restraining multitudes from crime, when love to God or to virtue would have been altogether ineffectual. Witches and fairies, ghosts and demons, gods and goddesses, the penances inflicted by the priesthood, and the terrors brought from the invisible world, (we allude, of course, to superstitious terrors,) have all exercised a power in keeping back mankind from deeds which would have proved injurious to society. The peopling of the air, the streams, and the woods, with supernatural beings, and of the darkness with ghosts, has deterred from the commission of crime multitudes who could not have been awed by the thought of an omnipresent God. Every one knows how dangerous it is, so far as the peace of society is concerned, to remove even a false religion, till such time as true religion has taken its place ; for, in rooting up the weed, the very grain may be torn up along with it. All statesmen have now come to see, that man cannot do without a religion. It has often been said, that the very worst governments are better than no government: and a precisely analogous maxim seems now to be adopted in regard to religion, that the very worst religions are better, so far as the peace of society is concerned, than none. Legislators have thence leapt to the conclusion, that the state should countenance every religion ; but this reasoning proceeds on the perilous fallacy that virtue consists in utility, and that virtues and vices pass into each other by insensible gradations. A higher and juster view of the nature of virtue, and of the essential difference between it and vice, would lead to the very different conclusion :—that, though under obligation to tolerate a religion believed to be false, we are not at liberty directly to countenance it in any circumstances, nor to any extent, without contracting a far greater amount of guilt than those who sincerely, though ignorantly, are the votaries of the mistaken faith.

Here the remark is forced upon us, that as almost all changes for good in society have been produced by men of earnestness and sincerity, as Carlyle has shown, so it cannot be expected of the legislators and philosophers of the utility school, that they should turn out to be the most effective agents in promoting the utility which they profess so much to esteem. Their principles will lead them to admire martyrs, but not themselves to become martyrs; for always, when the establishment of truth seems to be impracticable, they will be tempted to yield to the force of circumstances. They who are under the influence of principles which do not change with changing circumstances, are the parties who make circumstances to bend before the energy of their will, and who produce all those revolutions in opinion, in sentiment, and in action, which have given the impulse to human improvement.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTE (G.)—HUMAN VIRTUES (SO CALLED) AND VICES RUNNING INTO EACH OTHER.

"There is not on earth," says John Foster, "a more capricious, accommodating, or abused thing than conscience. It would be very possible to exhibit a curious classification of consciences in genera and species. What copious matter for speculation among the varieties of—the lawyer's conscience, cleric conscience, lay conscience, lords' conscience, peasants' conscience, hermits' conscience, tradesmen's conscience, philosophers' conscience, Christians' conscience, conscience of reason, conscience of faith, healthy man's conscience, sick man's conscience, ingenious conscience, simple conscience," &c.[*] We are not to enter into this wide field of curious and dark though not uninstructive speculation. Having given the general theory to account for them, we take up merely some points illustrative of man's existing state. It is curious to observe human virtues (so represented by the conscience) and human vices growing on the same root.

The modern French novelist is accustomed to exert all his startling art in exhibiting the growth of the common vices under fostering circumstances. A child, who never knew what it was to be warmed by human affection, is placed in circumstances in which there is no air to nourish the commonplace virtues, while there is a feverish encouragement given to far different qualities. Living in the contempt of the ordinary laws of morality, the child springs up into a bold, heroic, and generous youth, and performs deeds which command our admiration;—he saves the life of another at the risk of his own, or casts his protection over the weak and helpless. No doubt he has a bitter antipathy to certain individuals and sections of the community; but he has received kindness from none, and has been treated with cruel scorn and injustice by thousands. What claim has society upon him, except for his revenge, on account of the multiplied injuries inflicted upon him? His virtues, set off by the meretricious art of the writer, are all his own; while his vices, his fights, his robberies, his very murders, can be fairly charged upon the community, rather than upon himself individually, and are relieved by the gallantry and generosity of spirit displayed in the very perpetration of them. Or it is a lady of extreme beauty and sensibility who is made to flit before our vision; and we see her sacrificed to family pride or avarice, and bound to a husband whom she cannot love. An attachment springs up involuntarily in her breast towards a youth of daring courage and the gentlest generosity, who comes accidentally in her way, and reciprocates her affection. Resolutions are formed, and struggles made, with the view of eradicating the attachment, only to be baffled by untoward circumstances, and cruel usage inflicted on the parties suspected while yet innocent, till they are led or driven to an intercourse which, the author tells us, the world in its uncharitableness condemns, but condemns in utter ignorance of the circumstances, and which may be regarded as being hallowed, as well as sweetened, by the spirit of devotedness and self-sacrifice with which it is characterized.

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[*] Memoirs.

The healthier English mind recoils from such a picture with a just abhorrence; and reprobates the literature in which vice is so painted as to be admired. But this same boastful English spirit overflows with feelings of admiration towards a different, and it is supposed, a more perfect picture. We have an attractive view of the country squire—warm-hearted, honest, kind to his tenantry, liberal in supplying the wants of the poor, and sticking fast to his political party; and though it is not denied, but rather avowed with self-complacent candour, that he is given at times to excess in drinking, that he swears when in a passion, that at least he has no respect to God in his conduct, or humble submission of heart before his heavenly Governor—we are made to forget, or justify all this, in our admiration of his bluff integrity and disinterested charity. Or it is the British merchant that is brought before us in the market-place, open-hearted and open-handed; or the English yeoman in his sequestered cottage, industrious, respectful to his superiors, and attached to the ancient heads of his house; but both the one and the other, it is acknowledged without shame, if not with pride, are notoriously not given to penitence for sin, or to express love to God, which they do not feel; nay, it is not concealed that they are at times addicted to profanity and gross neglect of sacred duties; and yet we are made to admire none the less, but all the more, this worldly morality, because it is not rendered offensive by religion.

Truly our popular novels give us a correct picture of human nature; but not in the way in which their advocates would have it. They give us a picture, not of the world as it is, but of the world, as the world supposes itself to be. The skilful eye may see, by a deeper skill, in the skilful novel, the tricks to which mankind resort to disguise their characters from themselves, and deck them in assumed colours.

If the question related to the relative superiority of the Frenchman's or Englishman's feeling, we should have no hesitation in giving the preference to the latter as the healthier; but the question rather is, Is the feeling of the one or the other what it ought to be? The Englishman condemns, and very properly condemns, the picture drawn by the Frenchman. But can you deny, says the Frenchman, that the tenderness, the sympathy, the devotedness of my hero and heroine are commendable? No, says the Englishman; but we are not accustomed to think in our country that fine sentiment excuses open immorality. But the Englishman is too blunt and self-confident to perceive that it is with the same weapons that he defends himself when attacked. Do you not, says he, commend this sterling honesty and openness of character? Most assuredly we do, more than the fine sentimentality of the Frenchman; but we feel all the while, that if fine sentiment cannot excuse immorality, just as little can an earthly morality excuse an acknowledged ungodliness. That there is truth in the one picture as in the other—in the Frenchman's as in the Englishman's—we frankly admit. We would not dispute the co-existence at times of genuine feeling and purposes of heroism in the heart that plans robbery and adultery. We believe that there may be the exercise of sterling honesty, and large liberality, and devoted attachments, in peer and peasant, in merchant and mechanic, altogether unaccompanied with faith in God, or a sense of dependence on him. But just as the Englishman sets little value on the Frenchman's flowing sensibilities, cherished in contempt of the laws of morality; so we believe that the man whose conscience is properly balanced, and weighs all things in equal scales, will not allow himself to be hurried along by a blind admiration of mere instinctive qualities, which either have no respect to God, or set God at open defiance. Let us condemn not only the Frenchman's attempt to cheat us out of our morality by a theatrical exhibition of sensibility, but the Englishman's attempt to cheat us out of our reverence for piety, by the attractive and possibly far from faithful picture of a godless morality.

Let us mark how human virtues and human vices ever slide into each other, and are not separated, as true virtue must ever be from vice, by a distinct line of demarcation. We find, on anatomizing the characters of great men, who have also been bad men, that their noble qualities are woven like warp and woof with those that are baser, in such a way, that the two cannot be separated. The pride, the self-assurance, and passion of Robert Burns were indissolubly connected with that noble manliness and independence of spirit which he delights to display. Rousseau's exquisite sentiment, and his morbid jealousy and addictedness to sensuality, were associated together in his fine but effeminate and diseased temperament. No man can separate Byron's thoughts, often so grand and yet so wild and loose, from his previous history, his early vices, his precocious lusts and passions, with a conscience—roused into activity by the open nature of the rebellion against it—kicking against them. We think it should be admitted in all these cases that we could not have had the one set of qualities without the other—the genius and feeling in the particular form without the previous history, the disordered temperament, and the melancholy experience. We could not have had these throes, so indicative of strength, without the accompanying fever. Just as the wound in the body helped Harvey to discover the circulation of the blood; so it has been the rent in these men's nature which has enabled us to look into the living movements of their hearts. Are we therefore to palliate the vice, because of its connexion with the properties which we are constrained to admire? No; it were vastly more becoming to suspect the virtues that have sprung from so dubious a source—no, not to condemn the virtues, but to condemn the agent in his supposed virtues, as well as in his vices, because the elements of which the one is composed are about as base as the elements of the other.

Proceeding on the idea, that what are commonly called virtues are real virtues, we should find that no line can be drawn to divide them from contiguous vices; and Hume is right in saying, "All kinds of vice and virtue run insensibly into each other, and may approach by such imperceptible degrees, as will make it very difficult, if not absolutely impossible, to determine where the one ends and the other begins."* It might easily be shown how, out of the same elements of our nature, there may be produced avarice, as well as industry—malice, as well as what is called spirit—vanity, as well as amiability—cowardice, as well as caution. One man is a great hero, another is a great criminal; if they had but exchanged places, they would also have exchanged characters. Take the common ideas of virtue, and we shall speedily find that the difference between virtue and vice is one of circumstance, rather than nature—of degree, rather than of kind. What was esteemed as vice in one rank of life, would require to be regarded as virtue in another. Proceeding on the views of the world, and carrying them to their legitimate conclusion, we shall find moral distinctions effaced, and all defined ideas deranged and confounded. Let us learn, then, to draw back before we reach such an issue, and examine the stability of the ground on which the common notions are built. If it be true that certain vices spring from the same root as what are supposed to be virtues, it is worthy of inquiry whether these supposed virtues are to be regarded as virtues at all.

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* Morals, P. ii. sect. vi.

Every observer of human nature will admit, that the person of most correct demeanour might, under a different training, but with the same internal principles, have fallen into not a few acknowledged vices. This person has been kept right, merely in consequence of a way being hedged in for him, and by the operation of instincts in which there is nothing truly virtuous; and in another position, these very instincts might have hurried the possessor into open crime. Are we therefore to excuse the crime on the part of those who commit it? No, assuredly; but we are to make a searching inquiry into our mere outward decorum, lest it should turn out to be founded on principles and originating in motives which are no way morally commendable. Let us anticipate, in this matter, the day of judgment, where there will be "innumerable false and imaginary virtues, which will involve their possessors in deeper disgrace than vices themselves when acknowledged and deplored."

SECT. V.—SUMMARY OF THE ARGUMENT FROM THE COMBINED VIEW OF THE PHYSICAL AND THE MORAL.

In astronomy, the distance of a star is determined by surveying it from two points. In like manner, there seem to be heavenly truths which are best ascertained by taking two positions, and a view from each. It is from a consideration both of the physical and the moral that we obtain the proper measure of the Divine administration.

We cannot from the physical alone determine what God and this world are in their relation to one another. Considered in itself, the physical does seem so constituted as to be restrictive of human folly and punitive of human wickedness. But the argument is far from being complete, till we demonstrate, on independent grounds, that human folly and human wickedness exist. We have, throughout the whole of this Treatise, proceeded on the principle, that we cannot connect the facts till the separate existence of each has been ascertained on satisfactory grounds. By a preliminary examination of the Physical, it may be shown to be fitted to promote such and such ends; but the complement of the argument is derived from the consideration of the Moral, which shows that there are such ends to be served.

On the other hand, it does not appear, that from a consideration of the moral taken separately, we could readily form a proper estimate of the relation of God and the world. The internal feelings would be apt to be disregarded by mankind, so inclined to look to the world without instead of the world within, and would certainly be misinterpreted, but for the confirmation furnished by the visible dispensations of Divine providence. As the physical requires the moral, so the moral requires the physical, as its complement in giving a full exhibition of the character of God, and of his administration in reference to our world.

We have failed of the object which we had in view, if we have not shown that the two, the physical and the moral, are in complete harmony—a harmony implying, however, that man has fallen, that God is restraining while he blesses him, and showing his displeasure at sin while he is seeking to gain the heart of the sinner. Leave out any one of these elements, and to us the world would appear an inexplicable enigma. Take these truths with us, and there is sufficient light struck to show, that if we had but farther light, every mystery might be explained; and we feel that this farther light may be denied us just because of the probationary state in which, according to these truths, we are placed. There is thus introduced a consistency into the whole, including even the seeming inconsistencies which, if we cannot clear up, we can at least account for.

METHOD OF THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT.

BOOK FOURTH.

RESULTS—THE RECONCILIATION OF GOD AND MAN.

CHAPTER I.

NATURAL AND REVEALED RELIGION—THE CHARACTER OF GOD.

SECT. I.—ADVANTAGE OF HARMONIZING NATURE AND REVELATION.

At the close of our extensive survey, it may be useful to collect into a few heads the results which we have been able to gather in our progress. If, in the discussions in which we were engaged in the first book, we felt ourselves merely, as it were, in the vestibule; we now, after having passed through the temple, feel ourselves to be entering the chancel, the holiest of all. Here we seek to have God himself communing with us in a supernatural way, to clear up doubts and mysteries. "When I thought to know this, it was labour in mine eyes, until I went into the sanctuary."

One of the objects contemplated in this Treatise has been the spiritualizing of nature, which has been so carnalized by many, and in sanctifying it, to bring it into communion with religion.

We have often mourned over the attempts made to set the works against the Word of God, and thereby excite, propagate, and perpetuate jealousies, fitted to separate parties that ought to live in closest union. In particular, we have always regretted that endeavours should have been made to depreciate nature, with the view of exalting revelation; it has always appeared to us to be nothing else than the degrading of one part of God's works, in the hope thereby of exalting and recommending another. It is at all times perilous on the part of the votaries, whether of science or religion, to set the branches of knowledge which they severally prosecute against each other. On the one hand, science cannot accomplish ends truly beneficent, if it make an idol of works of God, and, Parsee-like, worship the sun, and moon, and elements of nature; and, on the other hand, religion is unnecessarily raising prejudices against itself, and is truly dishonouring God—while it may profess to honour him—when it would discourage inquiry into those works which he has spread around us, which are manifestly inviting us to contemplate and admire them, and rewarding us by a thousand discoveries, when we treat them as we ought to treat the Divine workmanship, and investigate them with patience and with reverence.

Perilous as it is at all times for the friends of religion to set themselves against natural science, it is especially so in an age like the present. We live at a time when all our educated youth are instructed in the elements of natural science, as well as in the more sacred doctrines of theology. We fear that there are many who know not how to reconcile the two faiths in which they have been educated. Meanwhile studious attempts are being made to show that Christianity cannot stand the light of the age in which we live. The impression left is very painful, when the mind imagines that it discovers a discrepancy between two departments of knowledge in which it has been trained, as painful as if one were to hear it reported of a revered friend, a parent, or brother, that he had committed a dishonourable or criminal action. Thousands have felt in this way, and thousands are at this present time so feeling, as they turn from secular books of science to the Bible, and when they enter our upper schools, our mechanics' institutions, and colleges. The heart of many a youth of promise has been wrung, till feelings more bitter than tears have burst from it, as he stood by the chasm over which no bridge seemed to be thrown. A dark cloud of doubt arising from that gulf has brooded over and settled upon many a mind, and has produced the same effects as a wet and cloudy atmosphere upon the body, damping by its moist and heavy influence all generous confidence, all zeal and enthusiasm. Others, abandoning religion, as laying restraints upon them to which they were not willing to yield, have betaken themselves to the splendid but uninhabited halls of science, and wander through them in wonder and admiration, but without ever finding, or so much as looking for, a governor to rule or a teacher to instruct, a friend to comfort, or a mediator to intercede for them.*

It is no profane work that is engaged in by those who, in all humility, would endeavour to remove jealousies between parties whom God has joined together, and whom man is not at liberty to put asunder. We are not lowering the dignity of science when we command it to do what all the objects which it looks at and admires do, when we command it to worship God. Nor are we detracting from the honour which is due to religion, when we press it to take science into its service, and accept the homage which it is able to pay. We are seeking to exalt both, when we show how nature conducts man to the threshold of religion, and when from this commanding position we bid him look abroad on the wide territories of nature. We would aid at the same time both religion and science, by removing those prejudices against sacred truth which nature has been employed to foster; and we would accomplish this, not by casting aside and discarding nature, but by rightly interpreting it.

Let not science and religion be reckoned as opposing citadels, frowning defiance upon each other, and their troops brandishing their armour in hostile attitude. They have too many common foes, if they would but think of it, in ignorance and prejudice, in passion and vice, under all their forms, to admit of their lawfully wasting their strength in a useless warfare with each other. Science has a foundation, and so has religion; let them unite their foundations, and the basis will be broader, and they will be two compartments of one great fabric reared to the glory of God. Let the one be the outer and the other the inner court. In the one, let all look, and admire, and adore; and in the other, let those who have faith kneel, and pray, and praise. Let the one be the sanctuary where human learning may present its richest incense as an offering to God; and the other, the holiest of all, separated from it by a veil now rent in twain, and in which, on a blood-sprinkled mercy-seat, we pour out the love of a reconciled heart, and hear the oracles of the living God.

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* See a very melancholy picture of the experience of Jouffroy in his "Mélanges Nouvelles."

In the foregoing discussions we have studiously avoided the direct introduction of Scripture, and this for several reasons. First of all, we did not wish to make religion responsible for our speculations, which must stand or fall according to the evidence adduced. Augustine has uttered a proper warning against the identifying of Scripture and human dogmatism, "lest, when a more thorough discussion has shown the opinion which we had adopted to be false, our faith may fall with it, and we should be found contending, not for the doctrines of the Sacred Scriptures, but for our own attempts to make our doctrine that of the Scriptures, instead of taking the doctrine of Scripture to be ours." We wished to avoid rendering ourselves liable to the rebuke of Bacon in that well-known passage in which he remonstrates with those who seek philosophy in the Scriptures, which he describes as seeking the dead among the living—as the seeking of religion in philosophy is the seeking of the living among the dead. "And this folly," he adds, "is the more to be prevented and restrained, because not only fantastical philosophy, but heretical religion, spring from the absurd mixture of things divine and human. It is therefore the wisest, soberly to render unto faith the things that are faith's."* Such weighty considerations, have led us to separate between our own ratiocinations and the dicta of the infallible Word. We were resolved, that if we could not bring any contributions to religion, we should at least keep from injuring it by making it lean upon our views and opinions.

We have had another object in view. We wished to contribute a quota of evidence to the support of the Divine original of the Scriptures. We were anxious to show that nature, rightly interpreted, so far from setting itself against Christianity, furnishes not a little to favour it, and that both give the same views of the character and government of God, and of the nature and destiny of man. But in order to lend such a support, however feeble, to revelation, it is evident that the prop must be built upon an independent basis. We have sought for such a basis, and have found it, as we conceive, in the government of God, as seen in his works, properly comprehended.

Nor are we bound to prove, in order to the use of this argument, that the human mind could have discovered all these doctrines by its native force. It may be doubted whether, without a revelation from God, we could have discovered the mine in which we have been digging; but this is no reason why we should not employ the wealth which has been found there in supporting the cause of Him who has conducted us to it. Such cases of action and reaction in evidence occur in every department of inquiry. The question is not, whether these views could have been discovered by unaided reason; but the question is—Now, when reason has been aided, does it not give its sanction to the doctrines which we have been expounding? Without the telescope we could not have discovered a multitude of the heavenly bodies which are now open to the observation thus assisted; yet it is by these very bodies that the astronomer tries and tests his instruments. The prop derived from the interpretation of God's works may be a support, provided always it has a separate basis, though it partially lean on the object supported.

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* Novum Organum.

And hence we are at perfect liberty, and in consistency with all that we have been urging, to agree with such writers as Halyburton and Leland, when they show the importance of revelation in clearing up the doubts that press upon and weigh down the human spirit. We may acknowledge the necessity of a light from heaven, to enable us to find out the territory which we have been exploring; but from that territory we may look up with gratitude to the light which has guided us, and every new discovery made may demonstrate that it is truly a light from heaven. Our argument is not a moving in a circle, but the reflection of light back upon the body from which it has come.

We are entitled, then, to urge the analogy or correspondence between natural and revealed religion as an argument in behalf of the latter. The phenomena to which the attention has been called are facts, and they establish the very doctrines revealed in Scripture. Other explanations, we are aware, may be given, and have been given, of some of these phenomena; but we hold that the explanation which we have advanced is the only satisfactory one. Even though it should be regarded only as accounting for them better than any other, or as well as any other, still the argument would not be without its force. Taking even the low view, that the Scriptures can enable us to explain some of the mysteries of the Divine government; or the still lower one, that the darker phenomena of nature admit of an explanation agreeably to the Divine Word—we should find even then a reflex contribution to the Word which has furnished us with such a key.

Apart altogether from the evidence in behalf of the Divine origin of the Scriptures, we have obtained, as it appears to us, many instructive and pleasing views of the ways of God, and humbling, yet exalted, views of the character of man. We have entered fields into which the inspired writers do not carry us, and in them we have gathered instruction in unison with the letter and spirit of the Word, and fitted to enable the reflecting mind to make a Christian use of modern philosophy. If it is the will of God that men should use their lofty faculties in investigating the works of nature, it is surely his will that they should also employ them in connecting the truths of nature with the truths of revelation. All cold and distant though some of these truths may appear, we believe that when the light of heaven shines upon them, the thoughtful mind may derive much from them to refresh and quicken the faith, as the snow-covered mountains send forth their streams to water the thirsty plains of torrid climes.

SECT. II.—PREVAILING DEFECTIVE VIEWS OF THE DIVINE CHARACTER.

There have been ages in the history of the world in which it might have been more needful to bring into prominence what are commonly called the natural attributes of God, such as his omnipresence and omnipotence. But the spirit of this age, fostered by the extensive study of geology, astronomy, and chemistry, always brings these perfections into bold relief, at the risk of causing other properties to sink out of view. We have been endeavouring to bring under notice the phenomena that are fitted to correct certain views of the Divine character, which are so prevalent and yet withal so superficial and inadequate.

First, the mechanical view of God. This is the natural product of a mechanical age. It is an age engrossed in studying the mere mechanism of nature, and its idea of God has come to be that of a great mechanician, or an omnipotent engineer constructing worlds like steam-engines, to work according to the properties with which they are endowed.

An apostle seems to allude to this form of infidelity as about to appear in the latter days. "Since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." Strange it is, that this infidelity, proceeding, no doubt, from the ungodliness of the heart, but taking its specific form and particular direction from the scientific character of the age, should have been spoken of, eighteen centuries ago, by a fisherman of Galilee. This error is to be met, not by an empty declamation against general laws, or a crusade against the discoveries of science, which must prove injurious only to the party undertaking it; but by a narrow scrutiny of these general laws, and a resolution of them into their elements; and, by demonstrating, that God is present in the very midst of those things which continue as they were—present, just as much as he was in the ages of miracles in which the fathers lived, or as he can be in that renewal of miraculous interpositions which may yet take place before the history of our world closes. We shall not succeed in making persons avoid the poison, administered in food, by denouncing the food, but by carefully separating the one from the other: the most effective method, in short, of rectifying error is to separate the truth from the error with which it has become associated.

We have sought to eliminate the truth by exhibiting nature in its full and living action. (1.) In the very operation of physical causes there must always be the presence of two or more bodies, with their several properties bearing a relation to each other, and so adjusted as to admit the action of the properties. (2.) In those general arrangements, so beneficial, which constitute general laws, there are numberless implied adaptations of substance to substance, of property to property, and cause to cause, and all these abiding or recurring in a world of activity and change. (3.) There is a vast number of events falling out, not according to any general order of recurrence, but individually, and, so far as human sagacity is concerned, incidentally; and, constituting a power by which, on the one hand, God accomplishes his specific purposes, and by which, on the other hand, man is rendered completely dependent on his Governor. Taking these general facts along with us, we are thereby introduced into the very heart of God's works; we can discover him alike in the general and the particular, and in the accommodation of both to the character of man. We are now out of that mechanism, which minds of high sentiment feel to be so offensive. We see not only the heart of the mechanism, we see also the very heart of the worker. It is not mere wheel upon wheel, and cylinder upon cylinder—we see now the moving power, and the whole issue contemplated; and in the connexion between them, we discover the agent displaying his affection and lofty principle, his purity and grace. All nature, before so dull, is now lighted up, but with light, we have to add, too brilliant for those eyes which prefer the darkness.

Physical investigation gives the mere bones and muscles, and these very commonly without their connexions. Common natural theology gives us these in their adjustments, but without the life, the full form, and expression. Both are too like the plates of bare anatomy, so different from the living form of the human body. But we must go beyond a mere machine—we must go beyond an organism—we must show how the works of God testify of one who lives and acts, who loves his creatures, who indicates his approbation of all that is good, and his disapprobation of all that is evil. Science, in short, gives us the mere ANATOMY of the body of nature, instructive, no doubt, in its exhibition of important members and organs; common natural theology gives us the PHYSIOLOGY of nature, and shows the full frame in its connexions and beautiful proportions: but the human mind will not rest till, in the region of a higher art, we have also its PHYSIOGNOMY, and nature presented in its living forms, its face radiant with smiles, and the deep lines of thought and character graven on its forehead. Such is the figure we have endeavoured to present, rising beyond mechanism to life, and beyond law to love, and finding the traces of a living God whom we may admire and trust, and, at the same time, revere and adore, and whose image, as we cherish it, assimilates our character to itself.

SECONDLY, THE SENTIMENTAL VIEW OF GOD. This is the product of the poetry as the other is of the science of the times; or, to go deeper, the one is the creation of the imagination and emotions, as the other is of the mere intellect empirically exercised, and both under the guidance of an unholy heart. The one view, like the other, is not so much erroneous as it is defective. Let us clothe the Divine Being with as bright a robe of loveliness as we please; but let us not pluck from him, meanwhile, his sceptre and his crown, or represent him as indifferent alike to evil and to good.

We have endeavoured to go down deeper than the mere floating feelings, in which, as in a shining atmosphere, so many envelop a body that is truly dark in itself, and call it the God of Light. (1.) There are arrangements of Divine providence by which God is visibly seen to restrain, to correct, and punish mankind. (2.) There is a law in the heart, which leads the possessor to approve of that which is morally good, and disapprove of that which is evil, and that even when he is neglecting the one and committing the other; and all this points to a righteousness in the Divine character, which is no less essential to his nature than his benevolence. (3.) There is an evil conscience which charges the possessor with guilt, and reveals impending judgments, while it makes known no method of atonement, and the whole pointing to an offended God. These are facts pressing themselves on our notice from without and from within, and which we are not at liberty to leave out of account, in forming a basis on which to construct our idea of God.

Taking these facts along with us, we rise above a Divinity, the mere creation of sentiment. Such a God—with reverence be it spoken—were not worthy to rule this great universe. We have sought to mount to the conception of a God fitted to govern the world, and to awe mankind into obedience and submission without any detraction from his love. True, he is a God on whom the eye of the sinner determined to continue in his sin does not delight to rest, and whom the wicked will hate just because they are wicked. But even in the very bosoms of such, God has a witness which testifies that his character is very beautiful; and which declares that it would be good for man were his eyes so strengthened that he could gaze upon it with pleasure, and were his character shining in the light reflected from it.

There are not a few in our day who, instead of contemplating the true character of God, look merely at certain pleasing accompaniments; and, instead of the true light, allow their eye to rest upon the clouds gilded by his beams, and which fade, like the blaze of the evening sky, into darkness while we gaze upon them. We would fix the eye on God himself, shining for ever in these heavens, and whose beams melt that which is hardened, and warm that which is cold on the earth—

> " As the great sun, when he his influence
> Sheds on the frost-bound waters, the glad stream
> Flows to the ray, and warbles as it flows."—COLERIDGE.

THIRDLY, THE PANTHEISTIC VIEW OF GOD. Pantheism has been compared to a cloud, and it bears to it a resemblance in more respects than one;—it is capable of great expansion, it bulks largely to the eye, at a distance it looks very like a solid body, it assumes picturesque shapes, and is often beautifully gilded, and when we would seize it, we find it eluding our grasp, and evanishing. It takes a number of forms, and upon our apprehending it, it is apt to perform a metempsychosis, and change from one to another. There is Material Pantheism, according to which it is the material universe, with its laws, its animation, and its thought, the result of organism, which constitutes the only God. There is Organic Pantheism, which speaks of nature as endowed with vitality, and deifies it (to use the language of Carus) as the highest, the most complete, the universal organism. If this mystical language has any realistic signification, it must mean that nature is just a magnificent vegetable, or an infinite brute, and that this vegetable, this brute, is God. There is Ideal Pantheism, which is the form which the system has taken with certain schools of metaphysicians addicted to deep reflection upon the subjective and upon the abstract notions which the mind of man can form. As they gaze upon these the material world disappears from the view as an independent reality, and leaves only a connected series of subjective forms or mental ideas, which are supposed to constitute, at one and the same time, God and the universe. According to Spinoza, this One is substance possessed of thought and extension. According to Fichte, it is a universal ego projecting the universe from itself. According to Schelling, it is a sort of ethereal essence, developing, according to a law, thought and being, which are identical. With Hegel it is the absolute unfolding itself according to a logical process, in which nothing becomes something, and the ideal the real, and God becomes conscious in humanity. Whatever be the shape taken, it is liable to the following among other objections:—

(1.) It might be shewn to be inconsistent with the consciousness of self, with the consciousness of personality. In all consciousness we know ourselves as persons; in all knowledge of other objects we know them as different from ourselves, and ourselves as different from them. It follows that all is not God, that God is not all, for we know of at least one eminent exception, and that is ourselves, the object with which we are most intimately acquainted. Pantheism is thus found to be opposed to our very intuitions, to our very consciousness, and no matter what the proof adduced in its favour be, it never can be equal to the evidence against it found in the very constitution of our minds.

(2.) It is inconsistent with the traces of adjustment and purpose everywhere met with in nature. No form of Pantheism admits final cause, and yet how numerous the traces in God's works of a concurrence of means to produce an end. It is not mere law or development, physical or logical, which can give us existing nature, with its curious coincidences, its intended accidents, and pre-determined contingencies, but a mind seeing and ordaining beforehand, contemplating at once the means and the end. Nature tells us regarding itself that it is not a power coeval and co-ordinate with God, but a work planned and executed by a Maker existing before it, and still existing above it. We have found in the course of these investigations something more than a mere power, or principle, or abstraction; we have reached a personal God, whose character is in his works, but whose works do not constitute his nature or character. The painter's soul is no doubt thrown into his painting, and the sculptor's and architect's into their statues and edifices, but their souls meanwhile exist apart, and are capable of other acts besides. In a sense as true as it is grand, the soul of the Creator is streaming through the order and life of creation, but meanwhile he exists independent of and far above them.

(3.) It is inconsistent with the possession by man of a separate and a free will. It is the circumstance that we are possessed of a distinct will which suggests the idea that God is not a law or principle, but a person with a power of voluntary determination. As conscious of an inherent and positive freedom, we are led to look upon God as also free. Nay, we go a step farther, and maintain that the possession of voluntary power and freedom on the part of man is a proof that the God from whom these proceeded has a will, and this a free will. It is not easy to gather, as to certain forms of Pantheism, whether they do or do not attribute will and freedom to God. All forms of Pantheism which do not ascribe a separate will to God, land us in the absurdity of supposing them to produce in man a free will not possessed by himself from eternity. If the other alternative be taken, and will be ascribed to Deity, then we have two wills in the universe,—the will of God and the will of man; and it follows that all is not one in any intelligible sense, for we have two distinct wills which may run counter to each other. Whatever be the philosophic system adopted, we have, as a matter of fact, the hundreds of millions of distinct wills possessed by human beings. These separate wills shew by one process that God must have a distinct will, and by another process that there cannot be merely one will in the universe, and they thus set aside every system which declares that "All is One!"

(4.) It is inconsistent with our intuitive belief of accountability to God as Judge. There is in man, we have seen, a native principle leading him to distinguish between good and evil, and pointing to a punishment to follow, and to a Being to inflict the punishment. This feeling of responsibility implies that God is Judge, and that we must give an account to him of the deeds done, whether they have been good or evil. But Pantheism must set aside all belief in a personal immortality, and all apprehension of a judgment day. Under such a system it is seen to be vain to suppose that God can seriously purpose to punish the sin, or so much as to condemn it, and it is acknowledged that at death the soul is swallowed up and lost in the all-absorbing One. At this point, then, Pantheism comes into collision with irradicable principles of the mind, (stronger far than any arguments which can be urged in its favour,) which announce that we are accountable, that we who are judged must be the same as the persons who committed the deeds, and that God as Judge must be different from those who are judged.

A German speculatist has lost himself in the windings of nature, as the traveller will lose himself among the trees and intertangled branches of a forest. There is a way through the wood which humbler men, which peasants know; but which the proud will not submit to inquire about, and they toil and wander amidst gorgeous scenes, and think that they are making progress, and they do turn aside many a branch which would interpose itself in the way, and they exert prodigious strength and amazing ingenuity, but having never found the near way, or the right way, the paths in which they walk either conduct them into deepening thickets of error, or land them nearly at the point at which they started. "By the roaring billows of time, thou art not ingulfed, but borne aloft into the azure of eternity." By the roaring billows of proud speculation, we would rather say, thou art but borne along to that dim region in which we lose sight of thee. No doubt, the imagination is often deceived by the gay drapery in which the object set forth to our contemplation by Pantheism is decked, and the intellect, dizzied by the many turnings of sophistry through which it has been carried before the vision is disclosed, is the less capable of detecting the deception; yet the heart, more faithful than the head, will feel at times that it is but a phantom which it is required to love and worship, and that truly within there is neither heart nor life, though there may be grace and motion in the outward form. The worshipper carried through the long avenues of columns and statues, and the splendid halls of the ancient temple of the Egyptian Thebes, was not conducted at last to a more miserable termination, when in the inner shrine he found one of the lower animals, than the follower of a modern philosopher, when conducted through processes, laws, and developments to a divinity who has less of separate sensation, consciousness, and life, than the very brutes which Egypt declared to be its gods.

SECT. III.—CHARACTER OF GOD AS REVEALED IN SCRIPTURE.

"Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord." We quote this language in the way of adaptation—not in its original meaning, (when it simply states the doctrine of the unity of God,) but as expressive of the important truth, that there is a wonderful consistency, or rather identity, in the representation given of the Divine character in the Scriptures. "The God of Israel is one Lord."

"The Bible itself is a standing and an astonishing miracle.

Written, fragment by fragment, throughout the course of fifteen centuries, under different states of society, and in different languages, by persons of the most opposite tempers, talents, and conditions, learned and unlearned, prince and peasant, bond and free; cast into every form of instructive composition and good writing, history, prophecy, poetry, allegory, emblematic representation, judicious interpretation, literal statement, precept, example, proverbs, disquisition, epistle, sermon, prayer—in short, all rational shapes of human discourse; and treating, moreover, of subjects not obvious, but most difficult; its authors are not found, like other writers, contradicting one another upon the most ordinary matters of fact and opinion, but are at harmony upon the whole of their sublime and momentous scheme."*

In the language now quoted, reference is made to one of the most convincing of the self-evidencing truths of that Word, which carries within itself its own credibility, and is visible in its own light. We have an example in the thoroughly consistent representation given of the character of God. It is the same God exhibited under the patriarchal, the Jewish, and the Christian dispensations. Except in the degree of development, there is no difference between God as revealed in Eden, on Sinai, and on Calvary—between God as exhibited in the books of Moses, and as exhibited so many centuries later in the writings of Paul and John. In the garden, we have the lawgiver, and we have indications, too, of the Saviour. On Mount Sinai there is the same combination of awful justice and condescending mercy. In the mysterious transactions on Calvary, there is an awful forsaking and a fearful darkness, emblematic of the righteousness and indignation of God, as there is also a melting tenderness in the words of our Lord breathing forgiveness and love, and telling of an opened paradise. The first book shows to us, near its commencement, a worshipper offering a lamb in sacrifice, and the last discloses a lamb as it had been slain, in the midst of the throne of God. To Moses he reveals himself as Jehovah, the Lord God, "merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, . . . and that will by no means clear the guilty." Paul speaks of him as "just, and yet the justifier of the ungodly;" and John, as "faithful and just to forgive us our sins." Whence this harmony or rather unity in the Divine character? Whence this wonderful correspondence in the portraits drawn by so many different hands? We can account for it only by supposing that they all drew from one great original.

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* Discourse by Professor Maclagan.

We have endeavoured to show that the God of revelation is also the God of nature, when nature is rightly expounded, and when all its phenomena are contemplated. An exalted view of the spiritual nature of man will at once conduct to a belief in the spiritual character of God. Enlarged conceptions of space and time, and of the magnitude of creation, will at once suggest an omnipotent and omnipresent God. The providence of God indicates wisdom and care, with government the most particular and minute. The moral principle in man, pointing to an excellence in God to be admired, but to an excellence which man does not possess, gives evidence of a holy God governing a fallen race. Leave out any of these classes of natural phenomena, and we have a God under some one or other of the partial and distorted forms in which he has been presented in different ages and nations. Combine the whole, and we have a God identical with the Jehovah of the Scriptures.

All professed religions have seized on some one or other of the features of God, and their votaries have been determined in the choice made by the prevailing sentiments of their hearts, and the habits in which they have been trained. In those eastern countries in which the mass of the people have been consigned to a slavish subjection to authority, the popular religions have represented the supernatural power as exercising an iron despotism, and exacting a deep prostration. The dreamy and meditative spirits of the same region, again, have cherished abstractions which widen, and are dissipated more and more, till they are lost in an illusive and ethereal nonentity. Among the more active, spirited, and liberty-loving nations of western Asia and eastern Europe, the popular faith became more individual, personal, and anthropomorphic, and they approached their gods with a greater feeling of familiarity. Each divinity among the Greeks had a special character with special objects of interest, and the Pantheon embodied all the popular virtues and vices of the country. In less civilized countries, where the inhabitants ranged through wide forests and over rugged mountains, and the tribes were generally at fierce war with each other, the presiding divinities were painted in colours of blood, or in robes of darkness. And let us observe how, in each of these pictures, there is the seizing of some real feature of the character of God, though fearfully distorted, and brought out with horrid prominence. Vulgar minds would ascribe all this to the priesthood, forgetting that the priesthood itself, so different in different nations, is the product, and not the cause, of the tastes and cravings of our nature —which it may yet, however, by reaction, greatly foster and augment. And why, of all people, should the ancient Hebrews be the only nation which succeeded in embracing all that is great and lovely, to the exclusion of all that is degrading and offensive? Ingenious minds may speculate as they please, but sound reason will ever most fondly rest on the belief in a supernatural communication as alone able to explain the phenomenon.

How totally different is the God of the Hebrews from the divinities revered by those who lived in the neighbouring countries, and in the same states of society! What a difference between Jehovah on the one hand, and Osiris, or Baal, or Jupiter, not to speak of Astarte, and Venus, and Bacchus, on the other! The characters differ, not only in degree, but they belong to a different class or order, and are without a single common virtue, except that suggested by an unpacified conscience, as it points to a God displeased with human rebellion and folly.

The God of Israel, on the other hand, is altogether different from the God of the philosophers, whether of the demi-civilized nations of the East, of ancient Greece and Rome, or modern Europe. It might be easy, we are aware, to cull isolated passages from Plato, Cicero, and Seneca, in which there appear to be wonderfully enlarged views given of the Divine nature; but when the whole theology of these authors is taken in its combination, we find the select quotations to be utterly deceptive. Take Greece and Rome in their ripest periods, and examine their boasted "disciplines." The Epicureans removed their gods far above the care and supervision of human affairs; in short, as Cicero says, "admitted their existence in words, but denied it in fact."* The Academics may be regarded as represented by Cicero; they delighted in discussing everything, but they believed little. The Peripatetics habitually overlooked Divine things, and their views of God are acknowledged to be miserably meagre and unsatisfactory. There remains only among these famous sects that of the Stoics, usually represented as the most advanced of all the sects of Greece or Rome in the knowledge of Deity. According to them, there was one great Divine Principle or Being, with a vast number of other gods. This Being or Principle was represented by them as of the nature of fire, and was identified with the element fire, regarded by them as the most elevated and powerful of all the elements. This Divine power of fire they represented as the governing principle of the universe, regulating all things by cycles. In these cycles, which followed one another in never-ending succession, there was a periodical conflagration, in which all things were consumed into the elemental fire or Divine principle, which at this period reigned alone. Then, in the proper course of development, this ethereal substance began to condense, and first the sun, the heavenly bodies, and the gods were formed, and then the earth and men, and these continued to act their allotted part till the cycle closed with another conflagration, in which heaven and earth, with gods and men, were absorbed in the Divine and all-devouring ether. It might be easy to find language in the writings of this sect sounding loftily to the ear, (the Stoics were addicted to lofty phrases in ethics and religion;) but such was really the theology of the sect which produced the hymn of Cleanthes, which Cicero selects to represent sound and enlightened theism, and which ranked among its votaries Seneca, Epictetus, and Antoninus, among the greatest divines and moralists of all heathen antiquity. May we not hold the Stoic Deity to be the highest product which the Greek and Roman intellect could furnish in Divinity?

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* Verbis ponunt, re tollunt Deos.—De Nat. Deor.

How different, at this day, is the God of revelation, from the god of abstract and academic philosophy, whether it be that of speculative Germany, or sentimental France, matter-of-fact England, or Scotland with an intellect as hard as its rocks! These gods are all of a class. However they may differ in minor particulars, some of them being painted in more meagre and others in more gorgeous colours, they all agree in this, that they are shorn of the attribute of holiness. They all differ from the living and true God, who, while clothed in attributes as lofty as any which the reason of philosophers can develop, or the imagination of poets can conceive, is raised far above their crude conceptions, by being constituted a holy Governor and Judge.

But here we must draw a distinction, to save ourselves from a seeming contradiction. We assert, on the one hand, that from every mind there are reflected the living lineaments of the true God, and yet, on the other, that unaided reason has failed to exhibit them, except in a partial way. There is no real inconsistency here. The difficulties in the way of discovering the true character of God lie in the prejudices and partialities of the heart. These have so narrowed and warped the mind, that it has failed to rise to a full idea of the Divine character. Nevertheless, when that idea has been developed by those who have been carried up into a higher region by a supernatural power, the human mind may be capable of declaring that this notion is the true one. Nebuchadnezzar could not recall the "image of gold, and silver, and brass, and iron," which he had seen in the visions of the night, though he seems to have had some straggling recollections of it; but what his own memory and the knowledge of his sages could not produce, was accomplished by the prophet, when he made the figure stand distinctly, and with all its fulness of meaning, before him, and then he instantly recognised it. Now, we may hold, that there are on the human heart faint impressions of the Divine character, which it is difficult to read in the light of nature, but which, being read in the purer light of revelation, disclose the very God whom this revelation fully describes and exhibits. Some of the truths which we are expounding stand on the very horizon of human vision, and are seen very dimly by the unassisted eye; but when the optic glass of revelation is directed towards them, the misty shapes start into defined forms, and we are satisfied at once of the correctness of the guesses made without the telescope, and of the accuracy of the telescope which has given such distinctness to the indefinite. We are entitled, then, in perfect consistency, to wield a double argument—in the first place, to show that the scriptural view of the Divine character is altogether in unison with that furnished by the works of God; and, in the second place, from the beautiful agreement of the two, to establish the Divine original of that Word in which the Divine character is so accurately represented. So far from being contradictory, we believe that the one involves the other, and that they meet in the necessary harmony of true reason and real revelation.

All this appears the more evident, when we consider, that in the various false religions which have appeared in the world, there are always to be found some of those conceptions which enter into the true idea. All religions exhibit some part of the truth, being that which the human heart was led to fix on in the circumstances. False and defective religions have, under the guidance of human nature, singled out merely those properties of God which impressed that nature, while in revelation we have the complete figure, drawn evidently by parties to whom God had immediately revealed himself.

In particular, we find, in all religions which have recommended themselves to large bodies of mankind, and which have exercised a powerful influence upon the human mind—a deep impression of man having rendered himself obnoxious by transgression to a God who has prescribed a moral law, and is offended by disobedience. The prevalence of such a sentiment shows how deeply it is seated in the human heart, and how unfitted philosophical theism (which provides nothing piacular) is to meet the felt wants of mankind. While the Scriptures have not overlooked this property of the Divine nature, they have stripped it of all the offensive adjuncts with which it is usually associated, and combined it with all those lofty natural perfections which the philosopher delights to contemplate, and with a love as unbounded and tender as the sentiments of man's heart have ever conceived; thus revealing a combination, of each part of which, the understanding, the conscience, and the affections are constrained to approve, but which, notwithstanding, has never been so exhibited, in its completeness, by the highest efforts of unaided reason.

CHAPTER II.

RESTORATION OF MAN.

SECT. I.—SYMPTOMS OF INTENDED RESTORATION.

Our argument under this particular section is far from being very consecutive or conclusive. It is safer, to say the least of it, to establish *a posteriori* that God has afforded a means of restoration, than to waste ingenuity in proving *a priori* that such an interposition of heaven is probable. In conducting this latter argument, we find invariably, that not a little is assumed which could have been discovered or rendered certain only by the revelation itself.

The few scattered observations which we have to offer are of an *a posteriori* and inductive character. We are to point to some facts which seem to indicate that God did intend to institute a method of restoring the race. In order to attain even such a presumption or probability, we must take into account two apparently opposite classes of facts.

. First, we must carry along with us an acknowledgment of human guilt, and of God's enmity to sin. Without doing so, we cannot advance a step in the argument. Proceed on the idea that man is very much what God would have him to be, and it is impossible to find a ground on which to build an expectation of the interposition of heaven. It is at this point that the argument of those who would demonstrate *a priori* the necessity for a Divine revelation is felt to be weakest. If mankind are in an unfallen state, and their Maker upon the whole satisfied with them, no other improvement can be reasonably looked for, beyond that which may be expected to proceed from human intelligence and philanthropy. We cannot get a foundation for the argument till certain facts have been established. In the *a posteriori* reasoning now pursued, we proceed on the demonstration which we have given of the sinfulness of the race, and the just indignation of the Governor of the world.

This fact alone, however, would not enable us to construct an argument. For it might be urged, with some plausibility, that God meant to allow the race to continue in their present degraded condition, without any special interference or restoration beyond that which might proceed from human agency.

And so we must, SECONDLY, take along with us the deep interest which God takes in the happiness and virtue of the race. Such facts as these press themselves upon our notice. (1.) There is the continued existence of mankind upon the earth, showing that, if God is displeased with human sinfulness, he is at the same time keeping up a system of government, having a special respect to them, and allowing them a period of respite and probation. (2.) There are the numberless bounties which mankind enjoy, shewing that, in spite of human sinfulness, God can be their benefactor. (3.) There are the pains which God is taking in his government to recommend and uphold virtuous conduct.

It is from the sharp collision of these classes of facts that we derive any spark fitted to shed light upon the destinies of our world. The former, if taken alone, could not lead us to suppose that God meant to do anything for a race under his displeasure. The latter, considered apart, might seem rather to indicate that God was contented with mankind, and meant to give them nothing beyond what they naturally possess. But let us take along with us the general fact that God is offended with human guilt, and connect it with the other fact that he is showering benefits upon the race; and there results a possibility, a presumption, if not a probability, that God intends to interpose for the vindication of a government which has been dishonoured, and the restoration of a race in which he is deeply interested. We cannot conceive of a thinking mind, seriously contemplating these two classes of facts, without there following a wish that there might be something to reconcile them—may we not add, without a hope or expectation, that the God who hates sin, and yet loves mankind, would manifest himself in a way fitted to exhibit his character under both these lights in combination? "I perceive that God is offended with mankind," would be the way in which such a mind would reason, "and I see that he is disposed to be merciful, and he would only be following out his own method of procedure were he to devise and execute some plan by which man might know the mystery of his relation to God, and rise from his present degradation."

Upon these two general facts, some general considerations may be founded, carrying a certain weight with them.

(1.) Mankind seem to be a race fallen, but not a race abandoned—a race which cannot rise of itself, but a race which seems to be kept with care, because it is yet to rise. When we see persons taking pains to deck a tomb, we are led to suppose that they expect the dead to rise again. The paintings, the ornaments, and devices on the sepulchres of ancient Egypt and Etruria, all seem to indicate that those bodies on which such delicate attention was lavished were expected to spring up in renewed life and vigour. Some of our readers may have been struck with the graphic description which a popular writer gives of the present condition of the Holy Land, appearing as if it were just waiting for the promised renovation.* "They shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations." And seeming as if they were waiting the fulfilment of this prediction, there is a soil—gathering in depth and fertility; and in the east of the Jordan, there are numberless cities without inhabitants, (Buckingham saw from one rocky eminence upwards of twenty-five,) but with the houses yet standing—in some instances, so many as 800 deserted dwellings, all ready for the inhabitants who are yet to dwell in them. And does it not look as if, after the same way, there were among the ruins of our nature some materials which God is keeping with care, that he may rear a new fabric? While, like the old men in Judah, we weep over the recollection of a glorious temple fallen, may we not with the younger men shout at the prospect of a more glorious temple yet to be built?

(2.) It does look as if our earth were waiting for something greater and better than has ever yet been realized. "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope; because the creature itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God; for we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." Inanimate nature and the lower animals do not serve the noble ends which they would have served had man walked upon the earth a pure and sinless being. The air of heaven, as we breathe it, has to pass through bodies which have been polluted by sin. The food which the earth furnishes has been commonly employed to pamper the bodies of those who give no thanks to God, and to nourish strength which has been expended in breaking his law and dishonouring his name. That sun which was to have lighted mankind on errands of love, has now to shed its beams upon the evil and the unjust, as they prosecute their schemes of selfish aggrandizement. And that lovely moon, and these chaste stars, have they not to look on still darker deeds of criminality which dare not face the light of day? May we not hope, that these great and beauteous works of God were preserved for a grander purpose than they have ever yet served? that this air is yet to be breathed by, and the light of these heavenly bodies to shine upon, beings as pure as they themselves are?

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* Keith's Land of Israel, chap. viii.

(3.) How universal, too, the restlessness, how deep the groanings and travailings of the human race! This world is not now, and never has been, what its inhabitants would wish it to be. Hence the constant endeavours to improve it, and which are successful at least in changing it. Whether taken individually or collectively, humankind do not feel themselves to be at ease. There is a deep uneasiness in every human bosom, arising from desires which have not been gratified, and craving appetites for good which has not yet been attained. This prominent feature of the individual is also a characteristic of the race. What never-ending schemes for the improvement of mankind, all proceeding on the principle that mankind need to be improved! Science is advancing its discoveries, and politics its reforms, and all to remove the evils under which the world is labouring. Some of these projects, it is true, are utterly impracticable—many of them leave the world just as they found it; but still, the very eagerness with which they are proposed and pursued shows that man is not satisfied with his present condition and the world in which he dwells. His exertions are too often like the struggles of the fever-patient, issuing in no permanent improvement of his condition, but the writhings and groanings prove that he is in pain, and would wish to be in a different position. Can we suppose that such universal wishes and expectations would be excited without a deep reason? Do not the universality and the fundamental depth of the desires seem to indicate that they may be gratified?

(4.) Let it be frankly admitted that there is progress in the world. There is progress in agriculture; there is progress in all the arts; there is progress in all the sciences; the earth is every succeeding year made to yield a greater quantity of produce, and man's dominion over nature is rapidly increasing. The fruit of the discoveries of one age contains the germ of the discoveries of the generation that follows; and the new plant springs up alongside of the old one, to scatter seed like its progenitor all around. No valuable invention of human genius is ever lost, and most of them become the means of multiplying themselves by a greater than compound interest, and thus render each succeeding generation richer than the one which went before. The wealth of all preceding generations is thus to be poured into the lap of the generations that are to live in the latter days of our world's history.

How sad to think, that amidst all these improvements in the arts and secular knowledge, there should be no corresponding improvement in the *morale* of the human character! A thousand means have been tried, and the tendency of many of them has been excellent; yet human nature has continued as vain, as proud, and selfish, as much given to lust and passion as it ever was. When some one was enlarging to Coleridge on the tendency of some scheme which was expected to regenerate the world, the poet flung up into the air the down of a thistle which grew by the roadside, and went on to say, "The tendency of that thistle is towards China; but I know, with assured certainty, that it will never get there—nay, it is more than probable, that after sundry èddyings, and gyrations up and down, and backwards and forwards, it will be found somewhere near the place in which it grew." Such has ever been the issue of those boasted schemes of human wisdom which have professed to change the heart of man. Human nature is in this respect like the salt sea; the sun is daily evaporating its waters, but does not drink up one particle of that saline ingredient; if men will drink of its bitter waters, they sicken, and madden, and die; all the rivers that run into it have not changed its saltness. It is thus with that malignant nature which we inherit and propagate, all human means have failed to purify it, and it stimulates to madness, disease, and death.

But is there to be a physical and an intellectual, and no moral progress? Is the lesser to advance, and the greater to remain stationary? Does God take a greater interest in the improvement of human knowledge and refinement than in that of the heart and conduct? Is he to dissever more and more the physical and the intellectual from the moral and religious; to move on the one, while the other continues where it was, to impress us the more with the fearful gap between? Or, rather, does not the whole government of God show that he values the former chiefly as subsidiary to the latter? In the past progress of the one, we have thus a presumption in favour of the coming progress of the other. The one advances by human agency under the ordinary proceeding of Providence; it requires, no doubt, means, but not miracles. The other, it seems, cannot attain its end through mere human activity; and since it can be accomplished in no other way, we call in the intervention of God, and feel as if such were necessary, in order to the harmony and completeness of plans at present in operation.

Some of these considerations may seem to be brought from a great distance, but by their collection and clustering, they appear to us to form a pleasant belt of light—a kind of milky way, hung over our world, in this its dark night, to give light to the traveller who has set out in search of truth.

SECT. II.—WHAT IS NEEDFUL IN ORDER TO THE RESTORATION OF MAN—(1.) IN RELATION TO THE CHARACTER OF GOD.

We feel now as if we had firmer ground to stand on. It is difficult to prove *a priori* that God should interpose for the rectification of his own government, and the improvement of human character. There is less difficulty in fixing on the points which require vindication.

The gospel professes to be remedial, and remedial of an evil affecting the laws of God, and the character and condition of man. It is in its reference to the Divine government that we are to discover, if indeed we can discover anywhere, its appropriateness.

Now, we find the plan of redemption fitted in every particular to meet the evils existing in the world, as these present themselves to an earnest and thoughtful mind. This adaptation furnishes one of the highest of all the internal proofs in favour of the religion of the Bible. There may be an argument derived from the beauty of the style, so much superior to what might be expected from Hebrew shepherds and Galilean fishermen ; and an argument from the heavenly elevation and purity of the morality ; but there may be an argument of a still higher order obtained, from the fitness of the whole scheme in its reference to the government of God and the state of mankind. That these excellencies should all have met in a cunningly-devised fable of certain Hebrew writers, is a supposition vastly more improbable than that the religion should have descended from heaven. Those who ridicule the alleged credulity of the Christian, are themselves obliged to yield their assent to the most monstrous incredibilities.

Nature cannot tell beforehand how a Divine intervention is to accomplish its object, for that intervention must be beyond nature, beyond all its findings and experience. It can announce, however, that if it meet the clamant evils, it must be of a twofold character, corresponding to the twofold derangement.

FIRST, THERE MUST BE A PROVISION FOR VINDICATING THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT, DISHONOURED BY THE REBELLION OF THE CREATURE, AND THIS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CHARACTER OF GOD. THEN, SECONDLY, THERE MUST BE A PROVISION FOR RECTIFYING THE HEART AND NATURE OF MAN. The first of these is found in the righteousness and sufferings of the Mediator, as giving glory to God, and effecting a reconciliation ; and the second is provided in the inward operation of the Sanctifier. In the one, God's government is justified ; and by the other, man's character is sanctified.

FIRST, THE INTERVENTION MUST PROVIDE FOR THE VINDICATION OF THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT.

"Of law, there can be no less acknowledged than that her seat is in the bosom of God ; her voice, the harmony of the world ; all things in heaven and earth do her homage, the very least as feeling her care, and the greatest as not exempted from her power ; both angels and creatures of what condition soever, though each in different sort and manner, admiring her as the mother of their peace and joy."* If so much can be justly said of law, what is to be said of those who have set this law at defiance, and that under its most sacred form—the form of moral law? No proposed scheme for dispensing pardon deserves to be looked at which does not provide a means of upholding that law.

This moral law points to God as giving and defending it, and when we look to him we are constrained by our moral nature to regard him as a being who hates evil and who punishes it. The conscience of man not only approves of the good but disapproves of the evil, and declares that the evil is deserving of punishment. Besides, an abhorrence of evil is an essential element in holy exercises of will. If we follow out the intimations given by these facts of our moral constitution, we must believe that God hates sin, and that as upholder of the law and Governor of the world, he ought to punish transgression. We have the very same evidence of all this, as we have of the fact that God approves of the good, and will reward it. We are entitled to say, not metaphorically or anthropomorphologically, or in the way of accommodation to man, but literally and truly, that God hates sin—not as a personal offence against himself—but that he hates sin as sin, and has a feeling of holy indignation against the perpetrator.† He who proposes to provide a scheme by which the sinner can be received into favour, must not be allowed to overlook these essential elements of the Divine nature and perfections.

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* Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity.

† All systems of atonement (that of Mr. Maurice, for example) are defective, which do not embrace (along with other elements) a means of reconciling a God who hates and who punishes sin. But let it be carefully observed, that it is not a retaliation or revenge for a personal offence that God is supposed to require. This is the only idea of an atonement which some (*e.g.* Mr. Greg in his Creed of Christendom, p. 262) are able to entertain, and hence they wonder how God should not at once forgive sin as man may forgive a personal slight. But we have seen in examining the moral constitution of man, that the disapproval of sin, (see p. 341,) and the hatred of sin, (p. 314,) differ in their whole nature from the mere resentment on account of offence given, (p. 425.) The two first belong to the moral constituents of man, the conscience, and the will, and the last to his emotional nature. It has been customary with these same parties, Christian and Antichristian, to represent the punishment of sin as merely something following sin in the course of things, "not the execution of a sentence, but the occurrence of an effect." True, it is an effect following in the course of things, but the question arises, who hath appointed this order of things? The course of events might surely have been otherwise. The course of things brings punishment because God hath so appointed it, and God hath so appointed it because he hates sin. In order to avoid the effect, there must be a means of rendering satisfaction to the justice of God.

In contemplating its moral state and the relation in which it stands to God, the mind of man has ever felt in its unsophisticated musings that there must be some satisfaction given to God and his law. Hence the services which the heathen have paid to God, and the sacrifices which they have offered with the view of appeasing him. These "unconscious prophecies" (as Trench has called them) of the one great offering and sacrifice, shew that man feels his need of reconciliation with a God who has had just cause of displeasure. Yet they point to the need of a true saviour less by what they furnish than by its palpable insufficiency to effect the end contemplated. What man brings shews that he has felt the void, but shews, too, that he cannot fill it. The remedies applied prove that disease exists, but prove at the same time that they are unfit to heal it.

There is something in man's nature which intimates that God, in calling—as he does call—his creatures into judgment, demands of them that they bring an obedience. It is because of this deeply seated feeling that there are such exertions made by the thoughtful to procure a righteousness; hence the ceremonial services to which mankind naturally resort, "going about to establish a righteousness of their own." Need we shew how vain the attempt? For why does God demand obedience? It is because of his very nature and character as a just God, and from the relation in which he stands to his creatures as their Governor. But the same attribute of God which leads him to demand obedience, makes him also demand that it be an obedience in all things, at all times, and in all places. The conscience is in this respect in unison with the Word of God, and announces that the righteousness which man brings should be spotless and perfect. But then, in transacting with God, no given man can present any such righteousness.

As feeling this, man has ever anxiously looked round for a substitute, and would fondly believe that he has found such in a priesthood, or in some creature representative. But the proposed substitution, while it shows the feeling of need, only brings out the more strikingly the impotence of the remedy. For a fellow-man, from the circumstance that he is a sinner, cannot give for himself such an obedience as God exacts, and still less can he give it for others. Nay, no other creature of God can provide such a righteousness for him, for every creature is required as for himself to fulfil the universal law of God, and after he has loved the Lord with all his heart and discharged every commanded duty, he has not acquired any merit of supererogation to be carried over to the account of another. Not only so, but it might seem as if God himself were precluded from providing anything to suit the transgressor, and that this inability arose from his very greatness. The righteousness required of man is obedience, and the only righteousness which can be of any use to him must partake of the nature of obedience. But God, as the author of the law, the Governor of the world, cannot give obedience. Herein lay the difficulty in the way of the restoration of a fallen being. Incapable of redeeming himself, no creature can possibly have any superfluous righteousness to impute to him, and it might seem as if God himself could not provide what man requires.

Three important facts are now before us. Man has felt the want; he has tried to supply it; and he has failed. Feeling that the heavens are at such a distance, he would construct a chain by which to mount to them, and he finds that he has nothing whereon to hang it. But where man has failed, God has succeeded, and by means which man could not have anticipated, but which, when announced, commend themselves to his moral nature as fitted to meet the evils which he had ever been endeavouring to remedy, but without success.

It is when we consider it in its fitness to solve all these problems, and harmonize all these oppositions, that we see the manifold wisdom of the mystery once hid but now unfolded, "the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh." The majesty of the law is upheld, the justice of God is satisfied, and an obedience is provided by one from whom obedience is not required as for himself, but who has power in himself, and puts himself in circumstances to render it. In order to accomplish these ends, and to display at one and the same time the two essential moral attributes of God, his justice, and his benevolence, one of the persons of the ever-existing and ever-blessed Godhead associates himself with humanity, and becomes "obedient unto death," fulfilling the law in its precepts, and submitting to its penalty.

"I HAVE GLORIFIED THEE UPON THE EARTH." We reckon this language as very remarkable. We know not if God has been dishonoured anywhere throughout a boundless universe so much as he has been upon the earth. Revelation, indeed, speaks of the angels who fell; but, with their exception, we know not if any other creatures of God, in any other world, have so dishonoured him by breaking his commandments; and in regard to them, the righteousness of God was instantly vindicated by their being consigned to punishment. But for these four thousand years which had run their course, before the appointed Deliverer came down to this earth, one generation of men after another had gone on dishonouring his name and breaking his laws with apparent impunity. Never had God been so dishonoured without an instant and public vindication of his justice. But on the very earth where he had been so dishonoured, is he now glorified. This is done in the work of the appointed Substitute, in which the law is magnified and made honourable, and divine justice satisfied, while room is opened up for the fullest manifestation of the divine mercy. This is done in the name and nature of those who had so dishonoured God, so that, as by man God has been dishonoured, by man God is now glorified. All this is done at the very place at which the wickedness of man had been so great; so that, as on the earth God had been dishonoured, so now, on the earth, God is glorified.

That we may be the more forcibly impressed with this exhibition of the divine glory, let us convey ourselves, in imagination, into the heart of those dark scenes into which the Redeemer is represented as having entered immediately after the utterance of the words on which we have been commenting. At the darkest hour of that night, a band of officers, headed by an apostate apostle, come with glaring torches to apprehend him. His other followers, after showing a momentary courage, speedily abandon him. He is dragged before the tribunal of the high priest, where, on the testimony of lying witnesses, bribed for the purpose, that high priest pronounces a sentence of condemnation on him, from whom, though he little thinks of it, his office derives all its authority. In the courts of the judge, we hear, mingled with the scoffs and jeers of the multitude, the cursing, swearing, and open falsehood of an apostle. He is now carried to the judgment of the civil governor, by whom the decision is referred to the people, who loudly demand that he should be exposed to the most painful and humbling of all deaths, and the governor, convinced all the time of his innocence, orders him to be crucified. All parties take their part in the scene. The soldiers scourge him ; and as he moves along the streets of that city which had heard his discourses of unparalleled wisdom, and witnessed his miracles of astonishing power, the multitude cover him with infamy. It is amidst derision that he is nailed to the accursed tree. His dying agonies move no compassion. One of the thieves crucified along with him reviles him, as a greater malefactor than himself. His prayers, breathing of divine compassion and melting love, are answered back by reproaches and scorn. Where else can such concentrated wickedness be met with ? Blindness and darkness of mind, unbelief in spite of overwhelming evidence, ingratitude for unnumbered favours, injustice, perjury, profanity, malignity, unappeasable revenge,—and all this against the meekest of all men—all this against God who is blessed for ever. It might seem as if God had never been so insulted and defied. We wonder not that the earth should have trembled and shuddered, as if desirous to cast forth such wickedness from its bosom. We wonder not that the sun should have hid his face as unable to look on such a scene, more horrific than the most wicked which he had seen in all his unwearied rounds. But it was at the very place at which man was most dishonouring God that his representative was glorifying him. Where man was exhibiting the most appalling wickedness, *there* his surety was giving the most signal display of goodness. Where man, breaking loose from all restraint, was abandoning himself to open rebellion, *there* his substitute was becoming obedient even unto death. Where the wildest passions that ever stirred the human heart were raging uncontrolled, *there* one in our own name and nature was giving the most moving display of a tenderness which could not be ruffled, and of a love which could not be quenched. Where sin abounded, *there* righteousness did much more abound. The representative is lifted high upon the cross, that he might become a spectacle, and in the view of all men, in the view of wondering angels, and in the view of God, glorify God wherein he had been most dishonoured.

We may now define and gather into a head the general observations which have passed before us.

In contemplating this world, the thinking mind discovers a twofold derangement, and each presenting itself under a twofold aspect. Under one aspect we observe a government obviously orderly, yet filled with disorder. Under another aspect we perceive man, a sinful being, covered with kindness, and yet called to give an account of his deeds to a God who hates sin. These four facts will not be disputed by any man who has thoughtfully contemplated the world, or seriously examined his own nature. We everywhere meet with order, and also with sin, which is certainly disorder. The same moral nature announces to us that God hates sin, and that man has sinned. It must be difficult for a reflecting mind to deny any one of these four facts —almost as difficult as to deny the very existence of God, or the distinction between good and evil. How wonderful, that in a system originating in the sequestered land of Judah, we should have a plan in which they are all embraced and reconciled, the double derangement which they exhibit provided for, and mercy extended to the reconciled transgressor, while the order of the Divine government is upheld, and the justice of God completely satisfied! That land, shut out from intercourse with the rest of the world, must, we are constrained to believe, have had a special communication with heaven.

SECT. III.—WHAT IS NEEDFUL IN ORDER TO THE RESTORATION OF MAN—(2.) IN ITS RELATION TO THE CHARACTER OF MAN; THE NEED OF AN INTERPOSITION IN THE HUMAN HEART AND CHARACTER.

The need of such an interposition, in order to the rectification of a clamant evil, becomes visible whether we look at society at large, or inspect our own bosoms.

The infidel writers of last century were wont, in furtherance of the objects which they had in view, to represent savage life as one of spotless innocence and perfect peace. The visits of travellers, sufficiently shrewd to look beneath the surface, have served to dispel the illusion, and to demonstrate that there is more cunning and deceit, and no less selfishness and malignity, among rude than among civilized nations.

Again, there are persons who announce with oracular authority that advancing civilisation will change the very character of society. They forget that increasing knowledge, while it holds out new encouragements to excellence, also furnishes additional instruments and facilities to all that is evil. The art of printing, for instance, through which useful knowledge is disseminated, is also the medium through which scandal, vice, and irreligion propagate themselves; and this they are doing, to an incredible extent, in this our country in the present day, through the millions of noxious publications which annually issue from the press. The rapid modes of travelling and communication which modern times enjoy, and which enable the good to exercise a wider influence, admit, at the same time, of the more effectual and speedy transmission of all that is corrupt, baleful, and infectious. We require only to open our eyes, and not to shut our ears, to discover vice presenting itself with as unabashed and disgusting an aspect, and uttering as blasphemous words in the present, as in any other age of the world. In some respects, indeed, civilisation has reformed the outward man, whitened the outside of the sepulchre, but it has left it within as full of corruption as before.

The inhabitant of some busy town, wearied with its prevailing artifice and selfishness, its competitions in trade and rivalships in rank and family, repairs for a season to some sequestered village or secluded glen; and the peace and serenity that reign around him, the absence of all turmoil and open crime, leave upon him the impression that the character of the inhabitants is as lovely as are the works of God among which they dwell. Alas! he needs only a little deeper acquaintance with those who seem so innocent and simple, to find the same passions at work, and the same feuds and jealousies, as in the bustling city population. The countryman repays the visit of the citizen at a different season, and is surprised at and delighted with the comfort, the elegance, the courtesy, and apparent affection which everywhere fall under his view. It requires some little inquiry to discover that pride, vanity, and ungodliness, are beating and reigning in bosoms so decked and adorned as to conceal every rankling passion within. Should he go forth from the narrow precincts of the refined into the haunts of the lowest population of our cities, he will feel his sensibility affected by deeper sinks of iniquity than are to be found in any previous age of the world's history.

All classes of men bear, if we but narrowly examine them, the traces of their common lineage. You may discover them to belong to the race by their sins and passions, as well as by their bodily frames and common features. This common nature breaks forth and exhibits itself in each individual. The fond mother, as she rocks her child to rest on her bosom, or plays herself with its playfulness, is tempted to think that one so engaging can never be torn by wild passions. Yet it is most certain, that this child will no sooner begin to act as a moral and responsible being, than it will show an evil heart. That child, grown up to youth, and engrossed with the objective world as it dances before the eye, and seldom looking down into the dark subjective, is just as unaware as the mother was of the wickedness slumbering within, till perhaps it has carried him to a length at which he sees how far he is from innocence, but feels that retreat is cut off, and that there is nothing for him but to advance.

The remedy for such evils, in order to be effectual, must be a universal remedy, admitting of application to all ranks of men and stages of society, to poor and rich, savage and civilized. If one of these classes requires it, it can be shown, by a like reason, that all the others require it. Society, as it advances, opens up more exquisite pleasures, but it brings, too, more exquisite pains; it multiplies enjoyment, but it multiplies sorrow also; it kindles hopes, but it often quenches them amidst fearful anguish. Our readers may be reminded of that fine passage in which Burke speaks of the pity which we should feel for the "distresses of the miserable great," and the "fat stupidity and gross ignorance concerning what imports men most to know, which prevails at courts, and at the head of armies, and in senates, as much as at the loom and in the field." "They, too, are among the unhappy. They feel personal pain and domestic sorrow. In these they have no privilege, but are subject to pay their full contingent to the contributions levied on mortality. They want this sovereign balm under their gnawing cares and anxieties, which, being less conversant about the limited wants of animal life, range without limit, and are diversified by infinite combinations in the wild and unbounded regions of imagination.

Some charitable dole is wanting to these our often very unhappy brethren to fill the gloomy void that reigns in minds which have nothing on earth to hope or fear; something to relieve, in the killing languor and over-laboured lassitude of those who have nothing to do; something to excite an appetite to existence, in the pallid satiety which attends on all pleasures which may be bought; where nature is not left to her own process, where even desire is anticipated, and therefore fruition defeated by meditated schemes and contrivances of delight, and no interval, no obstacle is interposed between the wish and the accomplishment." Every one who has read the lives of the poets, and other persons possessed of that fearful gift, the gift of genius, knows that minds finely and tensely strung are fully as liable to be deranged as others, and need, no less than those who are exposed to the temptations of wealth and rank, the application of this soothing medicament.

But in order to discover the real depths of human depravity, and the extent of human helplessness, we must look beyond the mere outward action into the heart. It has been most mercifully enacted, that no man can look directly into the heart of another; but it has been most wisely provided, that every man can look into his own heart, and he is so far entitled to take it as a type or representative of our common nature. But no man can carefully inspect his own nature without being constrained to admit that he needs strength higher than his own to enable him to keep the law of God.

But if there be some one under the impression that he can of himself fulfil the will of God, apart from supernatural aid, we invite him to make the experiment. Let him determine to perform all his duty, and walk for ever in the light of purity, and all by his own strength of resolution. We are ready to admit, that there is much which he may do of himself. He may perform the ordinary business of life, discharge the courtesies of kind and obliging neighbourhood, and attend to the external forms and observances of religion. He may succeed in doing many a deed of kindness to a neighbour, and in refraining from acts of open immorality; he may acquire the habit of uttering a cold and formal prayer morning and evening. Some have attained to a character so becoming, that the most jealous and prying eye cannot detect in it a single outside blemish.

They have become as righteous as the straitest of the sect of the Pharisees, with no charity, but still with the most perfect correctness; with no meekness or humility, but still with the sternest rigidity. But let it be remembered, that there is something more than this requisite in order to our fulfilling the law of God. For the law is on this wise;—that a man love the Lord with all his heart, and his neighbour as himself; and that he live habitually under the influence of these affections, and of others flowing from them, and obligatory upon him in the condition in which he finds himself. Let the person who is inclined to make the supposed experiment, ponder this law in its purity and extent, and the probability is, that, previous to making the attempt, he will be oppressed with its utter hopelessness.

But there is a self-confident man not so easily appalled by difficulties. By all means then let him make the attempt, and let us watch him as he does so. Let him resolve to create this supreme love which he owes to his Creator, and the other kindred spiritual dispositions. For this purpose, he seats himself in the quiet and retirement of his closet, and resolves that he will induce or compel himself to love the Lord with all his heart. Knowing that it is conception that determines feeling, he calls up an image of God. First, he pictures a being of awful majesty and infinite power, and corresponding feelings of awe and wonder rise up in his mind. Again, he represents God as delighting in the happiness of his creatures, and for an instant there is a pleasing emotion playing upon the surface of his mind, and he begins to imagine that he has been successful. But suppose that the idea of the holiness of the Divine nature, shining in all its dazzling splendour, now rises up before his view, and that he feels himself to be a sinner in immediate contact with this searching light—we venture to affirm, that the contemplation will become less pleasant, and that, writhing under an unpleasant inspection, he will be tempted to turn away to other and less holy, and therefore more pleasing topics; or his love will be turned into slavish fear, and he will scarcely dare to gaze any longer upon this focus of light in the heavens—and the brighter the beams, he will be all the readier to turn away his eye to the lower, and what is to him the lovelier and greener scenery of this earth; or if, in obstinate determination, he continue to gaze, we venture to affirm, that the very light shall appear as darkness—as when the eye gazes long on the sun, he becomes shorn of his greatness and grandeur, and is seen a blank and uninteresting surface.

Such must be the fruitless issue of all attempts to create spiritual affection to a spiritual God. The man may say, Let there be light; but no light will arise. The result will be the same, should the experimenter attempt the performance of any of the specific duties which he owes to God. But if not convinced, let him make the effort in the spirit of Luther, and the failure will tend to give him a deeper sense of the ungodliness of his heart. Let him resolve to repent of his transgressions: for this purpose he would call up his sins; alas! it is only to find the treacherous memory dwelling rather on the good qualities that are supposed to make amends for them, or fixing on the pleasures which the sins have conveyed, and so tempting him anew to the commission of them. Or let him resolve to pray, as is his duty; he will find, that even while the words proceed from his lips, the heart is blank and void; that there is the attitude without the feeling of reverence—the prostration of the body without the humiliation of the soul. He may bring the sacrifice to the altar, as the priests of Baal did on Mount Carmel; but, apart from the opening of heaven to let down an influence, he will be as little capable of kindling it, as the priests referred to by cutting their bodies could bring down fire, which at once descended to the prayer of Elijah.

Such considerations as these should show, that as spiritual dispositions do not spring up spontaneously in the breast, so neither can they be forced. And if they refuse to give their momentary attendance when called, what reason have we to think that they will abide? And yet it is required, not only that we entertain them at certain times, as when a present object calls them forth, as when in a temple of God, and listening to a discourse on an exciting topic, or to music which causes our feelings to rise or fall with its notes, but that they be cherished habitually, and become the guiding principles of the life. Let it be supposed, for the sake of argument, that our experimenter has raised a momentary love to God by the force of native resolution; or, what may very possibly be, that he is temporarily under the influence of high religious emotion. The question now is, Will these feelings continue? If it be difficult to kindle the spark, it will be found still more difficult to preserve it from being extinguished by every burst of earthly passion. It is

> "The most difficult of tasks, to keep
> Heights which the soul is competent to gain."—WORDSWORTH.

There are times, no doubt, when there is a fervour naturally produced by the atmosphere in which the man happens to be placed; but there is a risk that his emotional temperature will sink as he goes into a different and colder atmosphere, as instantly as his bodily temperature when he has gone out of a warm apartment into the chill of a frosty night. Every careful observer of humankind knows that there are certain minds which, like mirrors, reflect the object passing before them, but only so long as it passes before them. When full under some heavenly truths, the emotions produced are lovely as those images of rocks and trees and clouds which we have seen reflected on the bosom of a tranquil lake—beautiful while they last, but removed by the first ruffling of the passing breeze. Not only so, but in the natural recoil and collapse, there is a possibility that the high excitement may speedily terminate in apathy or in enmity. The flame, beautiful while it lasts, dies down, and nothing remains but ashes. There are tides in human feeling, just as there are tides in the ocean; and because the tide is flowing now, there is no assurance of its continuing to flow—we may rather fear that it will soon ebb and recede. The man feels a momentary interest in religion, and he becomes vain in the thought that it is to continue; and this very vanity becomes the passage that leads him away to a far different temper. To-day, he weeps over his sins; and before he is aware of it, he is rejoicing in iniquity on the morrow. His efforts, even when they seem to be successful, are merely like the rippling on the surface of a stream made by winds opposed to the current; they have indeed a slight effect, and may make the careless spectator imagine that the waters are flowing in an opposite direction, but meanwhile the current beneath is flowing on in its proper course as determinedly as ever. His elevations are like those of a ship buoyed up on the top of a wave, seemingly above the earth, but never so high as heaven, and from this height he is apt to fall into the contiguous hollow. All this shows, that while man, by his unaided strength, may rise a little above his habitual level of earthliness, he cannot soar to the heavenly regions of purity and peace; and that if he seek, Icarus-like, to mount by earthly means, his flight may only make his fall the more lamentable.

Nor is our argument exhausted. The difficulties are seen to be immeasurably increased, when we consider, that man has not only holy dispositions to cultivate, but sinful dispositions to conquer. The carnal thoughts and feelings found in such rank luxuriance, all spring up with a native and spontaneous power. We think that we have succeeded, at some particular time, in destroying them; but, like noxious weeds, whose roots are interwoven with the soil, and whose seeds are scattered throughout it, when cut down in one quarter they speedily spring up in another. But should there be some one, confident that he can subdue them all in his own strength, we encourage him to make the effort. Let him say to his unruly thoughts and passions, "Thus far, but no farther, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed," and mark if the waters will roll back at his command. There will be times, indeed, when, removed from excitement and temptation, he may think that he is succeeding; at their natural ebb, the waters may seem to be obeying him, and fleeing as if in terror. But when they begin to flow in full tide, he will not be able to master them; and they will roll over him, with as little regard to his commands as the waves once rolled over the feet of the Saxon monarch, who showed his courtiers, when they were seeking to give him too exalted an idea of his power, how little control he had over nature without him, by an experiment not unlike that which we have instituted to show how little control we have over nature within us.

This evil, then, the evil of man's inability to raise himself, we find pressing upon our notice in all directions; and to meet it, we find the revealed redemption proffering the supernatural aid of the Spirit of God.

SECT. IV.—SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED—MEANS OF APPLYING THE AID.

We are now to mark the appropriateness of the method in which the aid is dispensed. It is in admirable adaptation to the constitution of man. The four indestructible principles in the human agent are—the REASON, the CONSCIENCE, the AFFECTIONS, and the WILL; and let us observe the manner in which each of these is addressed.

I. THE REASON IS ADDRESSED. We are required to believe, but to believe on evidence. This evidence is partly external, arising from miracles properly attested, and the fulfilment of prophecy; partly, indeed chiefly, internal, being such adaptations as those we are now considering, many of them being as wonderful and conclusive as those brought to prove the existence of God. In this, the Christian religion stands alone. There are persons who talk of the rivalry of religions as an excuse for adopting none, but in this respect there is no rivalry. Other religions, Pagan or Mohammedan, claim the beliefs of their votaries, on the ground of mere authority or descent from ancestors, of terror or blind feeling. Of all religions, Christianity is the only one which professes to be founded on evidence, and which is at pains to furnish it.

II. THE CONSCIENCE. (1.) *The conscience is pacified.* Conscience, we have seen, is a reflex faculty, judging of action presented to it. Sin, presented to it as sin, it must ever condemn. The sinner finds little difficulty in deadening it, at least at times, by presenting sin under a false aspect. But to pacify the conscience, to give it real and deep satisfaction, this surpasses the utmost exertions of human ingenuity. And yet, without such a satisfaction, the conscience will ever crave; or if occasionally lulled into slumber, it is only that it may awake in renewed vigour. Repentance, we have seen, cannot appease it, nor can self-inflicted tortures assuage it—they merely indicate that the mind is writhing with pain. In order to the pacifying of the conscience, there must be clear evidence that God is pacified. The attempts made in superstition, under all its forms, show that the human mind feels that God is offended, and that it is needful to provide a satisfaction. The conscience, in telling us that we have sinned, announces that God is holy, and cannot overlook sin. Nor will it be satisfied with a declaration that God will overlook sin; this would only puzzle and perplex the mind, as landing it in a seeming contradiction. The announcement that God overlooks sin would ever be met by a counter announcement, that God cannot overlook it. Human skill has not been able to reconcile this contradiction; and so it has never succeeded in doing more than deceiving the conscience, which is the readier to exact revenge, when the fraud is detected. But if it is needful, as every one admits, in order to the pacifying of the conscience, that God be pacified, it seems equally necessary, in order to its satisfaction, that a ground be presented on which God can be satisfied in consistency with the holiness of his character. In every system of proffered mercy in which no such provision is made, a double voice will be heard, as it were, ringing in the ear—the one saying, God is pleased; the other saying, God is angry; and the mind, instead of being at rest, will be distracted between them.

But let us mark how in the gospel system God is represented as pacified, and pacified in strict accordance with the maintenance of justice. Under it, our moral nature is oppressed with no sense of incongruity, when it is declared that sin is forgiven. We believe not only that the heart is melted by the expression of the Divine tenderness, but that our moral nature is made to approve of God, and entertains a more exalted conception than ever of his unbending rectitude. On the scheme being presented, and on the understanding being convinced that it has the sanction of heaven, the conscience, the feelings are satisfied—the whole soul is satisfied.

It is in this light that God is everywhere represented in the Scriptures. From the day on which man fell, God is presented to man under the double aspect of a just God and a great Saviour. The sentences pronounced on the guilty parties in Eden tell of an offended God, who has, however, provided a means of reconciliation. Sacrifices from henceforth become an essential part of all acceptable worship; and in them the worshipper, laying his hand on the animal, devotes it to destruction in his room and stead, in acknowledgment that he himself deserves to die, and yet in confident expectation of forgiveness through a substitute. The ancient Jew prayed morning and evening with his face towards the tabernacle or temple in which the lamb was being offered in sacrifice, and this in token of his belief in a means by which his person and services were accepted. The types of the Old Testament are still employed in the New Testament as means of communicating instruction, and serve the same purpose as pictures and symbols in a skilfully taught elementary school. The Old Testament is not superseded by the New. The one is a preparation for the other, not only historically, but also to some extent morally, in the training of the mind of the disciple. Introduce the reader into the New Testament, untutored by the Old, and he will feel a difficulty in grasping several of its truths. There is a great depth of meaning in the saying of an apostle, that the law is our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ. Besides supplying a body and a life to our conceptions, the Old Testament ordinances positively give us some of the conceptions themselves.

We have seen that the conscience decides according to the view presented to it. Hence the importance of right conception, in order to the satisfying of the conscience. Hence the pains which God took to raise a people in ancient times—the Israelites, for instance, just delivered from bondage in Egypt—to correct views of God, and the relation in which they stood to him. All that training through which they were put, has been handed down to us as a legacy, in much the same way as the discoveries in science and the arts are handed down from one age to another.* We become trained, as it were, in their training, and all that we may rise to correct conceptions of the character of God, and of the relation subsisting between him and man. We confidently affirm, that no other conception of the Divine character can satisfy all the essential parts of the constitution which God hath given to man—can satisfy at once the conscience and the affections.

Such is the view presented in the earliest revelation which God gave of himself. In the New Testament, the same view is exhibited, but much more clearly; and we have "Jesus Christ evidently set forth as crucified," and God displayed in "the face of his Son." "The only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." So far as we are under the faith of the New Testament, we cannot look up to heaven without discovering an advocate, which is Jesus Christ the Righteous, standing at the right hand of God, or a Lamb before the throne.

We have this very strikingly exhibited in the latest revelation which God has given. The apostle who closes the canon of Scripture is carried up in vision into heaven, where he sees an exalted and awful throne, surrounded by angels and saints, and innumerable living and immortal beings. Having surveyed the scene in mute astonishment, his attention is called to a book sealed with seven seals, containing evidently the mystery which, being unfolded, is to reconcile heaven to earth. A strong angel is heard asking with a loud voice, which fills heaven and earth, "Who is worthy to open the book?" An awful pause ensues. No one in heaven or earth, or throughout the wide universe, is able for the task, and John weeps over the weakness of creation. While thus desponding, he is told of one fit for the mighty work. He turns his eye to see, and what does he behold? Is it some grand and imposing sight, is it a splendid throne, or a dazzling light, or a majestic form, is it the mightiest of the angels clothed with the sun? No; as he looks, he sees an emblem of weakness and of sorrow, of suffering and of death; the sight presented in the very midst of the throne of God was of "a Lamb as it had been slain." There follows a succession of views or pictures of God and the redeemed; and it is a remarkable circumstance, that in every one of these the same image is presented. He obtains a lively view of the blessed inhabitants of heaven—and "they stand before the throne and before the Lamb." He hears their praise, and it is "Salvation to our God that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." A question is put as to the past history of those who now stand in white robes, and it is said, "They have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." He sees them in the enjoyment of the glory provided for them: "They hunger no more, neither thirst any more; because the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and lead them to living fountains of waters." In another passage, John is represented as looking, and lo, a lamb stood on Mount Zion, and with him a great multitude; and who are they, and whence their joy? They are they "who follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." In one of the closing chapters, we have a lengthened description of the holy city prepared for the saints; its walls are of jasper, high and deep, with twelve foundations; its streets and dwellings are of pure gold, with a foundation of precious stones; its gates are pearls, and its watchmen are angels. But these splendours do not separately nor conjointly constitute the glory of heaven. Its chief ornament is its temple: "And the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it, for the glory of God enlightens it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." The sinner is made to feel that he dare not look up to heaven, unless he see the Lamb before the throne; but feels that he can look up with confidence when God is presented under this aspect.

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* We have seen (pp. 119-128) that there is a typical system in nature; there is also a typical system in the Word of God; and it might be shewn that both are suited to human intelligence, which delights to think by means of images or figures, and to arrange objects according to types.

Such is the consistent conception of God which the Scriptures lead us to entertain. It looks as if it were the conception above all others (we believe there is no other) fitted at once to give satisfaction to our moral nature and our sensibilities.

(2.) *The conscience is rectified.* It is one of the most melancholy effects of the corruption of man's nature, that his very conscience has become bewildered. Recognising in a general way the distinction between good and evil, it makes sad mistakes in its particular decisions. The deceitful heart has taught it the art of looking through a false medium at the sins which the possessor of it commits, and thus enables him to enjoy an all but unbroken self-complacency. It is difficult, above all things, to rouse the conscience from this its somnolence, through mere addresses to it of truth derived from the natural conscience, for against all such appeals it hath already fortified itself. In order to its being roused, there must be an address from a higher region—there must be a voice from heaven, recalling it to its pristine recollections. We have heard of the high-born prince, lost and degraded from his youth, and with no surviving knowledge of his native grandeur, having the memory of it awakened by the voice of a friend, who had been with him in the scenes of his younger years, and who recalls incidents which make the forgotten truth flash upon his mind. There needs such a voice—the voice of a pure and holy law, descended from the region in which the conscience received its first instruction, to recall it to a sense of its present disorder and primitive destination.

And the voice which rouses it must continue to guide it. For never did it feel itself so helpless as now when it is awakened to a proper sense of its condition. Before, it was wandering without knowing it; but now it feels itself bewildered as in a forest, and the very tracks before it confusing it the more, for it knows not which one to choose. Ever going wrong, it knows not when it is right; and it has a painful feeling of the need of something by which to regulate itself, and in accordance with which it may move. The law, then, has not only, in the first instance, to arouse the conscience, it has to serve the farther purpose of righting it in its motions. When it hath lost its delicate sensibility, and its power of direction, there seems to be only one method of restoration, and that is, by placing it alongside of a pure standard of right and wrong, as the magnetized iron which hath lost its virtue is restored by being bound up for a time with a correctly pointing magnet.

III. THE AFFECTIONS ARE GAINED. (1.) Here let us mark how it is needful, in order to this, that the conscience be appeased. An evil conscience always leads the mind to avoid, as if instinctively, the remembrance of the party offended. There cannot, then, be love to God in a mind in which conscience has not been appeased, nor can there be any of those cognate graces of faith, confidence, hope, and joy, which ought to fill and animate the soul. The appeasing of this moral avenger is an indispensable preliminary to the flowing out of the affections towards God. Provision is made for this in the Christian religion, but in no other religion recommended to man. The philosophic systems have no proposed method of appeasing the conscience. The more influential of the superstitions that have prevailed in the world have felt the need of satisfying God and the conscience, and have set man on a vain attempt to accomplish this end by means of the affections which he cherishes and the services he pays, forgetting that no true affection will be cherished, and that therefore no acceptable service can be paid, till first the conscience is assuaged. Herein lies the weakness of all the philosophic religions, that they do not so much as profess to make any provision to meet this felt want; and herein lies the weakness of all forms of superstition, that they would accomplish the end by means which cannot be attained till the end itself is attained. The former do not so much as profess to give what to the sinner is a prerequisite to the commencement of religion, and the latter set us in search of it in a road which ever leads back to the point at which we started. In Christianity, and in it alone, a provision is made for thoroughly cleansing the heart from the sense of guilt, that thus the soul may be allured upwards in holy affection, and onward in practical godliness.

Not only so, but in order to gain the heart there must be a free, a full, and instant forgiveness. It must be free ; for it cannot be purchased. It must be full ; for if anything were left unforgiven, the conscience would still grumble, and the soul, so far, would be in a state of enmity and rebellion. It must be instant ; otherwise the mind, still without peace, could not begin to cherish confidence and affection. Nothing short of this will allay its agitated waves, and allow the image of God, who is love, to be reflected on the bosom.

Besides this instinctive aversion which it excites towards God, an evil conscience is ever, it may be unconsciously, a source of irritation. We say, Peace, peace, when there is no peace. How can there be peace, when the soul is not at peace with its Maker ? And when the soul is not at peace with God, it cannot be at peace with itself. When conscience, as the regulator, has lost its control, all the other principles of the human mind are in disorder, and are moving with appalling rapidity, and each in succession disturbing the soul, and all adding to the tumult. Instead of love, peace, and trust, there will be instincts, lusts, and passions, under no restraint except that which is laid upon them by their jostling against one another. When the winds of heaven cease, the waves of the ocean gradually rock themselves to rest ; and when the conscience, acting on behalf of God, ceases to lash the soul, there is a preparation made for all the thoughts and feelings gradually composing themselves into calmness and repose.

(2.) Let us mark how, contemporaneously with the pacifying of the conscience, there is presented an object fitted to win the affections, now at liberty to flow towards it. The Saviour, who delivers us from the condemnation of sin, presents himself in all his loveliness in order to gain our hearts.

"WHOM HAVING NOT SEEN, YE LOVE." Some, we are aware, would doubt of the possibility of our loving an object which we have not seen, and would represent the affection of the believer to his unseen Redeemer as visionary in the extreme. But in doing so, they shut their eyes to a property of our nature which is every day in exercise—truly, there are persons who do the greatest dishonour to human nature, while they pretend to exalt it. Man is so constituted by his Maker, as to be able and disposed to love objects that are distant and unseen.

We go farther, and maintain that it is not sense which kindles the mental affection of love. It is conception, the conception of a lovely object, which calls forth love towards that object; and sense aids affection only so far as it aids our conceptions, and in making them more vivid, makes them more fitted to awaken the emotion. Let us inquire whether we have not in the Scripture representation of Jesus everything needful to call forth emotion. Let us inquire, in particular, whether we have not much that makes up for the want of sensible manifestation.

First, we have in the Word a very clear and lively picture of the character of the Redeemer. When the information communicated to us, in regard to any given individual, is very vague and imperfect, it is difficult, however worthy he may be, to fix our affections upon him. Had we been commanded to love Jesus, without any particular account being given of his life or his love, and without the lovely features of his character being delineated, it must have been very difficult to obey. But in Jesus, as presented to us in the Gospels, we have everything to attract and retain the affections. O that we had but lived in the days when Jesus tabernacled on the earth! is the wish which will at times rise up in our breasts. So situated, we think that it might have been easier for us to love him. In opposition to such vain wishes, and the gross ideas on which they are founded, we maintain that we have a view of the character of Jesus as much fitted to engage the affections as even those who are supposed to have been so much more highly favoured. Let us suppose that we had been living in the land of Judea, at the time when Jesus was working his miracles and publishing his sublime doctrine. On hearing a report of the new Teacher, we hasten with the crowding thousands to listen to his discourse; we hear one, it may be, of the most beautiful of his parables, or see him perform one of the most signal of his miracles. The whole transaction leaves a deep impression on our minds; and because we have seen, we believe. But in the meantime Jesus and the crowd sweep by, or he retires to the mountains to pray, or he visits some other part of the land; and we are constrained to return to the cares and business of life, and have few other opportunities of meeting with him.

Now, we maintain that we, who have the full Scriptures in our hands, have a better means of forming a full and attractive conception of our Lord than even those who lived in these apparently so favourable circumstances. In the writings of the Evangelists, we have his beautiful discourses, his striking parables, his casual remarks, all collected within a narrow compass, and a lively delineation of his conduct, with the particular incidents of it, by parties who lose sight of themselves in thinking of their Master, and never interpose to obstruct any of the light which comes from him. We, as it were—so lively is the painting—see Jesus acting, and hear him speaking, and that in a great variety of interesting and instructive circumstances. We see him while with his disciples, and with the Jewish doctors; amidst the acclamations of the people, and amidst their execrations too; as he rejoiced over the conversion of sinners, and as he grieved over their hardness of heart; as he pitied his enemies, and as he wept over the grave of a friend. We have all this, in books so simple, that a child can understand them, and so brief, that a little space of time will enable any one to peruse them.

Secondly, the Being whom we are expected to love is constantly bestowing favours upon us. We are willing to grant, that in ordinary circumstances, distance has a tendency to lessen the regard which friends entertain towards one another; but when we have around us constant memorials of our friend, the influence of separation will be counteracted. When the bereaved mourner, when the widower, for instance, looks around his dwelling, and sees in every part of it the peculiar property, or perhaps the very workmanship, of a beloved consort; and when the widow sees in every child that clusters around her knee the image of a lost husband,—they feel as if the departed were still present, and that amidst these memorials they can never forget those of whom they are so reminded. Now, the believer feels himself to be thus surrounded by memorials of God in his works—in the heavens and earth, and in his wonderful providence. The fact that God has made it adds a new lustre to every star, a new beauty to every flower, and the meanest of the works of God carry up the mind to the great Creator. Distance, we acknowledge, has a tendency to lessen the affection of friends; but this influence may be overborne when the friend is ever bestowing substantial favours. The believer does not feel that

God is absent, when he is constantly sustained by his power and fed by his bounty. The believer in Christ connects his very temporal mercies with the work and sufferings of his Saviour. "Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, *even the God of our salvation.*"

Thirdly, there is provided a means of communication between the believer and the object of his affection. Granting that distance may tend to diminish the affection of friends, we find this influence lessened when they can correspond by letter, or have frequent opportunities of meeting. We are willing to acknowledge that the love of the believer would grow cold and languid were he shut out from all communication with his God. But, in gracious condescension, God engages to meet with those that love him—not, indeed, in bodily presence, but not on that account the less truly, effectually, and comfortably; and love him as they may, they are assured that he is loving them with a ten thousand-fold greater affection. It is one of the most beneficent of the effects of the gospel, that it provides for the renewal of that fellowship with God which man had lost, but after which he is still aspiring in his deeper moods of mind. In this communion, there are all the elements to be found in the fellowship of a man with his neighbour. In human fellowships there are four elements—we speak to our neighbour, and he hears us; he speaks to us, and we hear him; and thus there is a thorough interchange of thought and feeling. There are the same elements in our fellowship with God when by faith we rise to it; we pour out our hearts before him, and he listens to us; he condescends to instruct us, and we attend to the lessons which he is giving. With such means of communication available, the believer feels as if his Saviour were present with him alway; and so far as he still feels that the communion is distant, so far as he still mourns an absent Lord, it is to desire more earnestly to reach that place where he shall enjoy a closer and an unbroken communion.

Aided by such circumstances as these, it is possible to form a vivid and abiding conception of the character of the Being whom we are required to love. And that character has in itself everything that is grand and yet attractive. Just as there is a beauty of shape and colour that pleases the eye, and a sweetness of sound that delights the ear, so there is a moral loveliness which ought to draw towards it the affections of the soul. But here, in the character of Christ as God, we have all kinds of beauty meeting and harmoniously blending. The excellencies to be found separately and to a limited extent in the creature, all meet and are infinite in him. We profess to admire true majesty when we meet with it; and will we not admire the Ancient of Days, on the throne of the universe, amidst the hosts of heaven, and exercising dominion over unnumbered worlds? With what should we be so much struck as with spotless holiness, which shrinks from the very appearance of evil? Alas! our eyes, as they wander over the world, cannot discover it among men, but here we have it shining in beauty, without a spot to detract from its loveliness. Do we feel ourselves constrained to admire benevolence? and will not our feelings flow towards Him who hath filled every part of creation, air, earth, and ocean, woods and waters, with animated beings, sustained by his power and fed by his bounty? Are our hearts softened by that tenderness which can forgive an enemy and receive him as a friend? and will they not melt in love when we hear of God pardoning the very chief of sinners, stretching out his arms to embrace them, and preparing for them enjoyments as glorious as they are enduring?

And there are qualities in the person and character of the object set forth to our contemplation and love which endear him yet more to the heart. In the very idea of an infinite God there is something calculated to overpower the spirit of weak and sinful man. Man, in every age of the world's history, has been afraid to look upon the full purity of God. His mind, pained by the contemplation, has been at great pains to carnalize a spiritual God, and embody him in symbol. Man has ever been carnalizing God, and in carnalizing has degraded him; but here, in the Christian system, is a God incarnate without being degraded. In the Mediator, the Divine and human natures are united, and in such a manner that the one does not destroy or overpower the other, but each retains its own properties, and the whole is in unity and harmony. The brightness of the Father's glory, without being shorn of a single ray, is represented under a milder lustre. All coldness and distrust are banished when we remember that, in drawing near to Christ, it is man coming to man. Unbelief is dispelled when we consider, that we have a brother's heart beating for us upon the throne of glory.

As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man. There is a universal sympathy between the members of the human family—there is a universal language which finds a response in every man's bosom. The cry of distress on the part of one man awakens compassion in the breast of every other man. Let a person indicate that he is in trouble, and numbers will crowd around him with eager curiosity and intense emotion. The language of feeling and sentiment will ever stir up corresponding feeling and sentiment. The orator and poet exercise such power over mankind, because they address these essential feelings of humanity. While our hearts are naturally drawn, by certain sentiments and sympathies, to every other man, there are certain men, or classes of men, towards whom our hearts are attracted with greater force, as, for instance, towards all whose sensibilities are quick, and whose heart is tender. And if these persons have themselves been in trouble, if their heart has been melted and softened by the dispensations of God pressing heavily upon them, our feelings turn towards them in yet stronger confidence. Disposed at all times to love such, our hearts are especially turned towards them when we ourselves are in trouble. Whoever may feel for us, we are sure *they* will feel for us, and we pour our complaints into their ears in the assurance of receiving attention and sympathy.

Now, this principle has a powerful influence in drawing the hearts of Christians so closely to their Saviour. The tenderness and sensibility of his human nature, as well as the holy love of his Divine nature, are brought before us in almost every incident of his life. We recollect how he fed the hungry and healed all manner of diseases ; how he restored the young man, whose dead body was being carried out of the gates of the city of Nain, to the embraces of his mother ; how he wept over the grave of Lazarus and the impending destruction of Jerusalem, —and we run to him as to one who feels for us under all our trials. We remember how he himself was acquainted with grief, in its multiplied and diversified forms, in body and in spirit, inflicted by man and God ; how he was often an hungered, without a home, or where to lay his head ; how the tongue of calumny was raised against him, and the finger of scorn pointed at him; how the favours which he conferred were met by no corresponding gratitude; how an apostle betrayed him, and the rulers of the nation condemned him, and the people demanded his crucifixion, and reviled him in the midst of his dying agonies; how the Father himself forsook him;—and when we remember this, we feel that there is no sorrow of ours which he will not commiserate. The friendless rejoice, for they have a friend in him; the helpless take courage, for their help is in him; the forsaken lift up their head and are comforted, in communion with him who was himself forsaken.

We have in him, the Son of God, and the Son of Man, the image, the only image (every other is idolatry) of God, and the model man, the type to which we are to look in the absence of any such pattern in our own hearts or among our fellow-men. An example in all things that we should follow his steps, he is especially so, in the spirit of self-sacrifice shewn by him, so unlike the spirit of the world. The great among men have become great by rising from a lower to a higher degree of power and honour; but the greatness of the Son of God consisted chiefly in this, that he made himself "of no reputation." If we would but think it, there may be a greater glory in suffering and sorrow than in prosperity and splendour. There may, for example, be a greater glory in the soldier's death than in his life,—there was a greater glory in Samson's death than in all the achievements of his life. But speak not of the glory of the soldier bleeding in defence of a nation's rights; speak not of the glory of the patriot toiling and suffering for his country's freedom; speak not of the glory of the martyr calm and rejoicing while tied to the burning stake; these have no glory, because of the glory that excelleth, the glory of him who left the bosom of the Father in heaven to suffer upon the earth and die upon the cross.

Such is the provision made negatively in removing obstacles to the flow of the affections, and positively in furnishing a suitable object on which to fix them. Could any other than the God who made man have so suited the remedy to his nature and constitution?

IV. THE CHANGE IS ACCOMPLISHED IN THE HEART OF MAN IN COMPLETE ACCORDANCE WITH THE FREEDOM OF THE WILL. Several interesting adaptations present themselves under this head.

(1.) There is a means, we have seen, of convincing the reason, and there is also a means of gaining the heart. These are not sufficient of themselves, such is the perversity of the human mind, radically to change the character; but in the very fact that they are employed, there is a homage paid to the human will. It is of the nature of the will to be swayed by motives, in the formation of which, both the understanding and the emotions act a part, and in the Christian religion all these human principles have their full play and liberty.

(2.) The blessed and Divine agent who produces the change commonly works through ordinances of God's appointment. The main means is the truth set forth in an inspired Word, and that truth of a kind eminently fitted to awe, and yet to elevate, to convince and persuade the soul. In the use of these means the mind is kept from indolence and inactivity, and yet is obliged to be humble and dependent. The Christian is spiritually put under an economy, not differing in the results, though differing in the means, from that under which every man is placed in the natural providence of God. In the use of the ordinary means which commonly lead to success in worldly matters, no man is absolutely sure of securing his end, owing to the cross arrangements of Divine providence, (which we were at pains to analyze in a former part of the Treatise,) while yet there is such a prospect of success as to hold out a motive to activity. It is by this double means, as we have seen, that the race is rendered at once active and dependent. It is most interesting to observe, that we find the same double agency in the spiritual dispensation of God, and that in this respect there is a beautiful analogy between the natural and spiritual economies.

While there is a resemblance, there is also a difference. In the spiritual economy, the means employed are not of themselves fitted to produce the end, and hence the Christian is rendered dependent on a higher power, while, at the same time, they usually produce the end, being so blessed of God, and so he has sufficient motive to vigilance and exertion. In the natural providence of God, on the other hand, the means produce the end of themselves, but may be thwarted by a thousand cross providences. May we not discover a design in the very diversity of the means employed? In the natural providence of God the means produce their end by an inherent power, and so invariably produce the end, except in so far as they may be crossed by other agencies. All this is done in order that we may put trust in nature, in order that sight itself may induce us to cherish faith, and that we may see the interposition of God more impressively, when the end is not produced. In the spiritual providence of God, on the other hand, the mean has no inherent power to produce the end, and thus the Christian is prevented from trusting in it, and made to look more devotedly to God as the true and alone source of all spiritual excellence. It is the manner of God in all his works to accomplish the same end by more than one means, and we may discover the Divine wisdom in the very variation of the agency to suit the circumstances.

(3.) We do not perceive the agent, who changes the character, at work; but we conclude that he has been working, by discovering the effects produced. It is for this reason, among others, that he is compared to the wind. "Thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." The silent nature of the Spirit's operations has sometimes made his agency to be denied altogether, by those who are ever demanding some sensible evidence of the truth communicated in the Word. But those who urge this objection, forget that many of the most powerful of the agents of nature are themselves unseen, and are only to be discovered by their fruits. We do not, for instance, see the wind whether it comes in the gentle breeze to fan us, or in the hurricane, to work such devastation among the labours of man and the very works of God. The heat that nourishes the plants of the earth, and the electricity so intimately connected with all atmospherical and organic changes, move secretly and in silence. These individuals forget that God is always himself unseen in the midst of his works. When we walk forth in the silence of eventide to meditate, we are constrained to acknowledge that God is everywhere present among these works of grandeur; and yet, by intense gaze, we cannot discover his person, nor, by patient listening, hear the sound of his footsteps, No jarring sound of mechanism comes across the void that intervenes between us and these heavens—no voice of boasting reaches our ears to tell of the worker; it is the heavens themselves that declare his glory. And why should the God who created us not be able to renew the heart when it is debased by the effects of sin, and yet be as unseen in the one case as the other? And there is a manifest congruity in the circumstance, that this agent conducts his work so silently and imperceptibly. It is only by such a mode of procedure that the spirit of man can retain its separate action and freedom. There is no violence done to man's nature in the supernatural work carried on in the heart. The dealings of God are, in every respect, suited to the essential and indestructible principles of man's nature. "I drew them with the cords of a man, with the bands of love."

V. Given a fallen race; to set them on a CAREER OF ACTIVE OBEDIENCE—is a problem which all reformers and philanthropists of the highest order have been endeavouring to solve, and with but very meagre success. Revelation professes to have solved it, and it propounds the following constructions:—

(1.) It provides a pacified conscience and a pacified God, and both pacified in agreement with the law of their nature. Other and mere human systems make, and can make, no such provision, and hence their partial failure. Under a reproaching conscience, the mind feels an awkwardness in all the services which it would pay to God. When the servant is conscious of having given offence to his master, there will always be somewhat of constraint in the obedience rendered, till such time as he has made confession of guilt, and obtained forgiveness. There is a restraint proceeding from a like cause, in the service which the sinner, labouring under an unpacified conscience, would pay to God. Besides, when he has no reason to think that his past offences have been forgiven, he feels as if all future exertions must be utterly fruitless. After he has done his utmost, he feels that he has not fulfilled that law of God which is so straight, and so unbending just because it must be straight. Climb as he may the height of perfection, he sees the summit rising still above him, wrapped in darkness and lurid with flame. After he has made some great exertion, he looks to the law to see if it will give him a smile of approbation, and he beholds only a darkening frown upon its face. Lashed by conscience, he makes greater and yet greater struggles, only to feel all his toilsome labours to be like those of one labouring under a load which is crushing him to the ground, or like the convulsive struggles of a drowning man, whose efforts are sinking him more speedily in the waters.

There is an individual who has contracted a load of debt which it is impossible for him to pay; and who, toil as he may, finds all his exertions to be lost, because they do not sensibly lessen his obligations. Care is painted on his countenance; fear haunts him by day, and disturbs his rest at night. The load which is pressing on his mind comes at length to prostrate his energies; he flees the society of his friends; he buries himself in solitude, he is ready to give himself up to despondency and despair. He has lost all his accustomed energy and ingenuity, because he has lost all hope of success, and all motive to activity. How, we ask, is it possible to rouse this man anew to a healthy energy? We know of only one way in which it can be effectually done. In his hour of deep mental prostration some friend runs to his aid, and supplies him with all that is required, in order to cancel his debt. The man now feels a burden lifted from his breast, while gratitude for the seasonable aid is quickening him to exertion, and hope is anew irradiating his path. Behold him once more in his customary place, holding up his head in independence in the midst of his associates, engaged with his wonted energy in the discharge of duty, and regarding all his past difficulties as only an incentive to additional vigilance. The reader will at once see the application of this illustration, as fitted to lead him to acknowledge the propriety of that scheme in which the burden of condemnation is removed, to set forth man upon a career of renewed obedience.

(2.) Revelation displays a supernatural agency to lead the soul to love and obedience; this agency, reaching the innermost principles of the mind, and that not to do them violence, but restore them to order.

(3.) Revelation displays also a means of gaining the affections by means of the objects presented to it. The service now paid by the reconciled heart is different altogether from the previous service. The one service, the legal service, was irksome; the other is willing and cheerful. While the one is the task of a prisoner who cannot, labour as he may, earn his freedom, the other is the homage of a spirit restored to liberty. The one proceeds from the fear which prostrates, and so is restrained, limited, selfish; the other proceeds from an inspiring confidence and a ready mind, and is in consequence hearty, generous, devoted. In the one, man works in the spirit of a hireling, always pausing to ask if he has not done enough, and if his taskmaster is not satisfied ; in the other, in the spirit of a son, who loves the service and him who appointed it, and is ever asking, if his Father in heaven has any other work which he wishes him to perform ?

(4.) There is a *beau ideal* of excellence provided in the character of Jesus. All human excellence, whether earthly or spiritual, has been attained by the mind keeping before it, and dwelling upon, the ideas of the great, the good, the beautiful, the grand, the perfect. The tradesmen and mechanic attain to eminence by their never allowing themselves to rest till they can produce the most finished specimens of their particular work. The painter and sculptor travel to distant lands that they may see, and as it were fill their eye and mind with the sight of the most beautiful models of their arts. Poets have had their yet undiscovered genius awakened into life as they contemplated some of the grandest of nature's scenes—or as they listened to the strains of other poets, the spirit of poetry has descended upon them, as the spirit of inspiration descended upon Elisha while the minstrel played before him. The soldier's spirit has been aroused more than even by the stirring sound of the war-trumpet, by the record of the courage and heroism of other warriors. The fervour of one patriot has been created as he listened to the burning words of another patriot, and many a martyr's zeal has been kindled at the funeral pile of other martyrs. In this way fathers have handed down their virtues to their children, and parents have left their offspring a better legacy in their example than in all their wealth, and those who could leave them nothing else, have in this example left them the very richest legacy. In this way the good men of one age have influenced the characters of the men of another, and the deeds of those who have done great achievements have lived far longer than those who performed them, and been transmitted from one generation to another. Now we have such a model set before us in the character of Jesus. And in beholding by faith his image set before us in the Word as in a glass, our character becomes assimilated to his. In looking with open face into the face of Jesus, his likeness is impressed upon the soul as we have seen the image of heaven reflected on the bosom of a tranquil lake spread out beneath it. "*We all with open face,* *beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."*

We affirm, without any risk of contradiction, that no religion, rational or mythic,* originating in human wisdom or human history, has met, or even so much as attempted to meet, these fundamental principles of the human mind, which are all satisfied in Christianity. It is surely strange, that a system in such beautiful harmony with all the constituent parts of man's nature, should have sprung up among the hills and plains of Judah. We could believe that a Hebrew shepherd composed the Principia of Newton, or propounded the principles of the Novum Organum, or the profoundest modern work on metaphysical philosophy, more readily than that he could thus have measured the heights of the Divine character, or sounded the depths of human nature. We are utterly confounded and lost in amazement, till, above the plains where ancient shepherds tended their flocks, we see a light from heaven shining around them, and hear a voice guiding them to the Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

But we have reached the *loci communes*, the common places of divinity which pious divines have trodden, while the steps of peasants have followed them. These are the topics enlarged on from the pulpit, and which, followed out during the week by the ploughman in the fields, by the shepherd on the mountains, and the mechanic in the workshop, have furnished them with the most convincing and satisfying of all evidences.

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* The objection used to be, every faith has had its supernatural events, and the miracles of Scripture are like those of other religions. This was answered by showing that the miracles of our Lord were entirely different in their nature, and in the evidence supporting them, from the miracles of heathendom. The objection now is, that every religion has had its myths, and that the narratives of the Word of God are mythical. This is answered by showing that Scripture history is corroborated, which myths never are, by history acknowledged to be true, and that they are different in their whole nature, and especially in their moral and religious tone, from any heathen fables. No records start up to corroborate the theogonies of Homer and Hesiod, as those of Nineveh confirm the Old Testament narrative. No human ingenuity could extract from any system of myths a pure morality, and still less a means of solving those great problems regarding the relation of God and man, which are settled in Christianity. But as the tendency to believe in supernatural interpositions shows that men have been looking for a revelation from heaven, so the disposition to embody faith in myths may be held as showing that they need a narrative as a means of instruction in doctrine. God has furnished in his Word, what man has ever felt that he needed, but was unable to supply—a true narrative evolving pure precept and doctrine.

ILLUSTRATIVE NOTE (H.)—THE GERMAN INTUITIONAL THEOLOGY.

We think it needful to distinguish between the method which has been pursued in this work and that speculative spirit which some are seeking to introduce into our country through the German philosophy and theology. Throughout the whole of this Treatise we have been examining this world in an inductive manner, with the view of obtaining a solution of some of the most important questions on which the mind of man can meditate. These truths, if we do not mistake, conduct to a well-grounded belief in the Divinity of the Scriptures. But when reason has handed us over to revelation, it bids us listen to that revelation. This witness as much as says, "There standeth one among you greater than I, and I exhort you to look to him."

There is an end for the present—and we should hope for ever—to that boasted rationalist school which prevailed to some extent in our land in a former age. Its icicles, thought to be so very beautiful, and really so very cold, have melted away in the heat of a more fervent season. But the dreamy sultriness which has succeeded is as unwholesome, and as unfavourable to spiritual life, as the cold which it has banished. All deep and earnest thinkers now see that there are truths in every branch of science too high, too deep, and too broad to be defined by a formal logic, or grasped by the logical understanding, that is, by the understanding logically employed. Human logic cannot define electricity or heat, nor explain vegetable or animal life; and how can we expect it to unfold the mysteries of the Godhead, and the Divine decrees? The human understanding, so far from being able to prove everything, needs itself a basis on which to rest, and that basis unproved and incapable of proof.

Instead of the RATIONALIST, we have now what we may call the INTUITIONAL THEOLOGY. It is not now the understanding, but *intuitions* of thought and feeling which are placed above the Word, and to them, with the Word as a mere servant or assistant, is allotted the task of constructing a religion. The religion thus devised, if not so consistent as that formed by the understanding, is vastly more showy and gorgeous, and suits itself to a great many more of the impulses of human nature. As in natural religion the blank scepticism of former times has been obliged, in the present day, to clothe itself in the dress of pantheism, to keep mankind from utterly abhorring it; so, in revealed religion, the rationalism, which was felt to be insufficient for any one practical purpose whatsoever, either in the restraining of sin or the gendering of holiness, has become a more pretending intuitionalism. Persons who believe in the Scriptures in no higher sense than they believe in Homer, Pythagoras, or Plato, who could not give an intelligible answer to the question, "What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?" and who know not so much as what the Holy Ghost meaneth, do yet decorate their pages with constant references to faith, to spiritual life, and the religious consciousness.

It would carry us too far away from our present purpose to trace the history of this system; nor do we think it needful carefully to allot to each supporter his share of the heterogeneous materials which have been collected to build the fabric. Certain principles laid down by Kant—principles which we regard as false in themselves (see APPENDIX VI.)—were being followed out in Germany to their legitimate consequences, and producing a very pretending form of universal scepticism, when Jacobi rushed in to protect philosophy by setting up Feeling (Gefuehl) as a counterpart principle to the Understanding. Schleiermacher carried a similar principle into theology, and sought to construct a religion out of feeling or consciousness. This scheme has been adopted by De Wette, and even, we regret to say, to some extent by Neander and other eminent divines, who have of late years been defending their system against another supported by the followers of Hegel, which professes to be more rational and logical. In doing so, it should be acknowledged that they have furnished very able defences and beautiful exhibitions of some of the essential truths of Christianity. But, as the practical result of the whole, the scepticism which began with the universities and the clergy has now gone down to the common people, and has assumed, at least in the cities, a form sufficiently vulgar and offensive; and the followers of Schleiermacher find that they have no power to allay the spirit which has been called up, for the dreamy intuitions of the divines are felt to be as incapable of being grasped by the practical understanding of the common people, as they are acknowledged to be incapable of being apprehended by the logical understanding of the philosophers. Yet this is the system which is being imported into our country by certain clergymen of the Anglican Establishment and Congregational ministers in England. In particular, Mr. Morell, after mixing with it a farther medley from the eclectic philosophy of Cousin, is seeking to recommend it to the British public. Our limits do not admit of our exposing its errors, but we are tempted to point out the fallacies to be found in some of its principles.

1*st*, We insist that no intuition be admitted in philosophic or religious speculation, till it is proved by induction to be in the constitution of the mind—nay, till its nature and rule be pointed out. *Crede ut intelligas* was the maxim of Anselm, and the counterpart maxim of Abelard, *intellige ut credas.* Both maxims are true, and the one limits the other. We acknowledge that there are intuitions in the human mind, and that, without them, the understanding, having no basis, could erect no superstructure. The whole would be like multiplying nothing by nothing—the result would still be nothing. But then we are not entitled in any speculation to proceed on an alleged intuition, till it has been shown to be an intuition. Nor can an appeal on this subject be made to the consciousness, for we are not immediately conscious of an intuition. We can be conscious only of the working of an intuition, and he who would determine what the intuition is, must by induction ascertain its law. The intuition, it is true, acts spontaneously in the mind, whether we observe it or not—nay, it must first act before we can observe it; but then, the previous observation is necessary, in order to our assuming this intuition in philosophic investigation. The intuitions act according to fixed principles, and these are the true principles of metaphysical philosophy; but we are not directly cognizant of them as general principles, and we cannot use them in science, till we have specified their precise nature. By no process of induction can we demonstrate the truth of fundamental principles, but it is only by a process of induction that we can find out what they are, and make a scientific use of them.* If we neglect to do so, we may find ourselves starting with error, and so can never arrive at truth, and the mind would ever have to unweave its own web. Nay, this latter error may just as readily conduct to scepticism as the former; for (to borrow an illustration applied to reasoning in Plato's Phaedo, § 89) as the individual who has trusted every man that professes to be his friend, comes at last to be utterly sceptical of the existence of friendship, so the person who sets out with believing every supposed natural intuition, may speedily arrive at a universal infidelity. For ourselves, we are exceedingly suspicious of some of those intuitions on which the theologians of Germany would rear such a superstructure, such as faith in God, consciousness of God, the knowledge of the infinite and absolute, the gazing upon truth as a whole, the perception of abstract beauty and holiness, and the religious life or consciousness. We would like to see them thoroughly sifted and tested, in the sense in which we have explained, by human intelligence, while we would like to see such an acknowledged intuition and faculty as the conscience followed out to its legitimate consequences by the learning and penetration of a German philosopher.*

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* We are prepared to defend the following propositions in regard to innate ideas or constitutional principles of the mind:—I. Negatively, that there are no innate ideas in the mind, (1.) as images or mental representations; nor, (2.) as abstract or general notions; nor, (3.) as principles of thought, belief, or action, before the consciousness, as principles. But II. Positively, (1.) that there are constitutional principles operating in the mind, though not before the consciousness, as general principles; (2.) that these come forth into consciousness as individual (not general) cognitions or judgments; and, (3.) that these individual exercises, when carefully inducted—but only when so—give us primitive or philosophic truths. It follows that, while these native principles operate in the mind spontaneously, we are entitled to use them reflexly, in philosophic or theologic speculation, only after having determined their nature by abstraction and generalisation. (See ILLUSTRATIVE NOTE E, pp. 289-291, and APPENDIX VI.)

2dly, We maintain that revelation addresses itself to the other qualities of the mind as well as the intuitions or intuitional consciousness. We have our doubts of the propriety of arranging, in a general way, all the higher faculties of the mind, into the logical understanding and the intuitional consciousness. What is made of the conscience on such a system—what of the will—what of the emotions? Religion, as a practical matter, is not addressed exclusively either to the logical understanding or the intuitions. Just as any one of them, or the two combined, cannot make any man a faithful father or an obedient son, a just sovereign or a righteous judge, so they are incapable of turning the sinner into a good Christian. The Christian religion addresses itself to the whole soul, providing evidence and facts for the understanding, and truth which shines in its own light to the reason; holding forth a perfect law and a perfect righteousness to the moral faculty; excellence to gain the will and loveliness to draw the affections; exhibiting these now separate and scattered in individual persons, incidents and propositions, and again displaying them all in unity in the character of God and Christ. As each of these faculties is addressed, so each has its part to perform; the understanding apprehending the facts, examining the evidence, and defending the truth; the reason sanctioning and adopting the truth when presented; the conscience bringing the sinner to the knowledge of sin, and approving of the righteousness of Christ; the will accepting of God as the perfect good; and the affections flowing forth towards God and all mankind, and enlivening the soul as they flow. We deny that religion has its seat among the mere intuitions. It spreads itself over the soul, and every faculty and feeling has a work to perform.

3dly, It is a Divine appointment, that the objective truth presented in the Word should be the means of rectifying the whole soul. There is truth presented to all and each of the faculties, that all and each of the faculties may be rectified. There are persons who complain of the Word, because it is not addressed to some one department of the human soul, on which they set a high value. The systematic divine wonders that it is not a mere scheme of dogmatic theology, forgetting that in such a case it would address itself exclusively to the understanding. The German speculatists, on the other hand, complain that it is not a mere exhibition of the pure ideas of the true and the good, forgetting that in such a case it would have little or no influence on the more practical faculties. Others seem to regret that it is not a mere code of morality, while a fourth class would wish it to be altogether an appeal to the feelings. But the Word is inspired by the same God who formed man at first, and who knows what is in man; and he would rectify not merely the understanding or intuitions, not merely the conscience or affections, but the whole man after the image of God. It is the enlarged and comprehensive character of the Word which makes narrow minds complain of it. Its variety is as great as that of the faculties and feelings, which it would restore to their primitive state and proper exercise.

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* The real intuitions of the human soul are just the human faculties and feelings acting according to their fundamental principles. (See APPENDIX VI.)

4thly, There are in the human mind capacities to apprehend the truth presented in the Word. "There is a light which lighteth every man which cometh into the world," (John i. 9,) and this light we are assured comes from the Eternal Logos. What the nature of that light is, we seem to be told in Rom. i. 20, and ii. 14, 15. It is partly external, being the light which shines from the works of God, and partly internal, that which is reflected from the moral constitution of man. What we need in the present day in systematic theology, is a scientific exposition of these two elements. Until they are unfolded in an inductive manner, we have no right to use them in the construction of any system, Christian or anti-Christian. For if Schleiermacher appeals to feeling, so also do Rousseau, Emerson, and F. Newman, and in order to determine which is making the legitimate use of feeling, we must inquire, in the manner of Lord Bacon, what feeling is, and what feeling says. Physical science is unfolding, in this way, the external facts, and mental science should bring out in the same manner the internal intuitions. This treatise may be regarded as a proffered contribution towards such a construction of the elements of natural religion. The internal capacities and principles at the basis of them, constitute the natural subjective of which some make so much. These, if inductively unfolded, will of themselves shew that they do not render supernatural truth unnecessary, nay, one of their deepest utterances is a cry for something which they cannot furnish, but which is supplied in the Word of God. For while there is light in the world, it is light which "shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not." (John i. 5.)

5thly, Along with the objective Word, there is a Divine power applying it internally, not merely to the intuitions, but to the whole faculties of the soul. This Divine power does not act independently of the objective truth presented in the Word, but acts by means of the truth, and thus deals with man as an intelligent and free agent. It is by the double influence of the objective truth and the subjective operation of the Spirit of God, that the religious life or consciousness is awakened within.

6thly, It appears evident to us that the truth presented in the Word must, in order to rectify the faculties and feelings, be pure truth, without any admixture of error. A corrupted truth presented to a corrupted mind would be a new element of confusion and derangement thrown into the already bewildered mind. Were the mind not perverted, it would not need such truth to rectify it, but, being perverted, it requires truth to set it right; but should the revelation made to it be mixed truth and error, it could not, because it is perverted, separate the one from the other. "The harmony of our nature," says Mr. Morell, "has been disturbed, and with it the power of intuition is at once diminished and rendered uncertain."* The same author, following his German masters, lets us know, that the Bible is mistaken as to its historical and scientific facts, incorrect in its language as expressing the truth meant to be conveyed, erroneous in doctrine, not unfrequently wrong in its morality, and illogical in its reasoning. Every one must see that a word so defective is not fitted to restore the disturbed harmony of the soul, or to give certainty to the intuitions, but would rather tend to increase the distraction and the painful uncertainty. The soul which has lost its proper movement needs a pure standard to rectify it, just as a disordered timepiece needs a dial. Had the Word come to the soul as a mixture of truth and error, it would only have thickened the doubts of the anxious and inquiring spirit. In such a case no one could have been sure, in any given passage, whether it was the God of truth that was speaking, or merely Paul or John, or whether Paul or John had or had not committed a mistake. Nor could the mind, as yet perverted and disorganized, be expected to distinguish between the truth and the falsehood, and it would be constantly fixing on the falsehood as truth, and on the truth as falsehood. We cannot be grateful enough to God, who hath not left man to wander in an abyss of darkness, where he cannot get truth without error, and yet has no light to enable him to distinguish the one from the other.

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* Philosophy of Religion, p. 59.

7thly, They are putting that which is first last, and that which is last first, who seek first a religious life, and then imagine that mankind are to devise a religion for themselves by means of that religious life. For how are we to get the religious life but by means of the truth? The divines of the school referred to are speaking perpetually about the importance of the religious life: but they do not tell us distinctly how the sinner naturally without it may be made to attain it.* Now, we set as high a value as they do on a religious life: we acknowledge that without it there can be no acceptable worship or service, no true enjoyment of God or of the pleasures of religion. It is because we set so high a value upon the religious life, that we set so high a value on the inspired Word, as the means of awakening it. There is first the truth recommended by evidence, apprehended in some measure by the mind, and pressed upon the acceptance of the soul; and then, there is the truth acknowledged and received in faith, through the subjective operation of the Spirit of God; there is all this as preliminary to the religious consciousness. The religious consciousness thus produced consists of a many-coloured robe of righteousness, clothing and adorning the whole soul. Nor do we regard ourselves as guilty of any real or even apparent contradiction when we add, that it is by means of the spiritual life awakened within, that the believer rises to a full comprehension and enjoyment of the truth which first awakened that life.

But, *8thly*, We cannot admit that the religious life, even when produced, has any right to sit in judgment upon the Word. For how do we obtain the religious life but by the truth? Nor does it seem possible to attain a true spiritual life but by a scheme of pure truth, bringing with it certainty and assurance to the disordered and bewildered mind. That truth was conveyed to the early Church by the Old Testament Scriptures, and by the inspired teaching of the Apostles, or of persons instructed by them, and in after ages it is conveyed by means of the completed Scriptures. That Word comes to us as the truth of God, and when accepted it assures the mind, and succeeds in rectifying it; but having accepted it as the truth of God, we are not at liberty to treat it as a mixture of truth and error. We are now to obey the truth, and not make the truth obey us. As the mind needs pure truth presented to rectify its judgments, so it cannot, when rectified, treat that truth as if it were impure—accepting what it pleases, and rejecting the rest, according to what it believes to be its intuitions.

Nor is it to be forgotten that the religious life, even when formed in the soul, does not arrive at perfection on this side the grave. The religious life needs anew to be fed and strengthened by the truth which at first quickened it. Not even those who are in possession of spiritual life are in a state to set that life above the truth which has gendered it; for as it was by this truth that the religious life was first produced, so it is by the same truth that it is perfected. Nor are they at liberty to despise the letter, in a pretended attention to the spirit. Every man who acts in this manner will at times be putting his own spirit in the room of the Spirit of truth, and will be found asserting that to be the Spirit of the Word which is merely his own spirit.

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* Mr. Morell seems to derive the religious life from a very low source. "Our religious *life* we receive, for the most part traditionally, from the development of the Christian consciousness in the different communities which now compose the visible Church."—(Phil. of Religion, p. 199.)

This placing of the intuitions above the Word is in some respects more perilous than the setting of the understanding above the Word; for, when the understanding thus presumes to act as the arbiter of revealed truth, we can meet it on its own grounds. Its dogmas, if unsound, are at least clear and intelligible and so can be met and refuted. But this intuitional theology carries us into a region where every man's own spirit creates for him a scheme, which cannot be so much as examined, because it cannot be developed in a clear system, or put in such a shape as to admit of its refutation. In these circumstances we do not regret to find, that God seems to have sent among the builders of this heaven-defying tower such a spirit of confusion and variance, that no two of them can speak the same language.

We have a deep admiration of the genius and learning of the German philosophers and divines; but with all their ability and scholarship, they will never arrive at a system of speculative philosophy, clear and consistent, true and useful, progressive and permanent, till they condescend to study the human mind in an inductive manner; nor will they ever develop a sound system of theology, till they submit to sit at the feet of Jesus, and receive with meekness the Word from him.

SECT. V.—THE WORLD TO COME.

The world to come, of which we speak, may be understood, first, as the future earth; and, secondly, as the state of man after death.

First, the future earth. The past and the present point alike to the future. We live not only in a world of change—we live in a world of progress. There has been a gradual and evidently an intended advancement in the physical and intellectual amelioration of the race. While every benevolent mind must rejoice in this, it is just to regret the more that these real improvements are incapable of renovating man's nature morally or spiritually. The improvements of which we boast are mere means or instruments, which may be used for good, but which are also employed for evil. The electric telegraph will employ its lightning velocity in the service of sin, just as readily as in the service of God. Painting and statuary have been patronized, not unfrequently, by the most selfish and profligate of men—such as the Medici—and have been corrupting as well as refining the minds of their votaries. Music must ever waft the spirit of man into a region of greater loveliness and grandeur than the actual world; but instead of lifting it to heaven, it has often transported it into scenes where sin is rendered the more fascinating by the dress in which it is presented. Architecture has built temples to God; but it has also built mansions, in which temptation has spread its allurements, and its temples have been as frequently dedicated to superstition as to the true worship of God. There is no one power or element in the world capable of regenerating it. The power which regenerates the world, like that which regenerates individual sinners, must descend from a higher region.

Nay, the very Church of God, and the Word of God, cannot of themselves regenerate the world. They are inadequate for so great a work; because they cannot, by their own power, change human nature. With all our privileges, we feel that there is still something wanting. Our very acquisitions impress us the more with our still remaining deficiencies. We are more astonished at the crimes coming to light in our day, than we are in reading of the same deeds committed in any previous age. The creature is still groaning; and it will continue to do so, till, according to the promise of the Word, the Spirit is poured out on all flesh.

Not that we are on this account to despise or hate our world. We are rather to love that world which God so loved as to give his Son to suffer and to die for it. Whatever the gloomy and disappointed may say to the contrary, this world of ours is a glorious world after all. It is glorious in the displays which it gives of the Divine perfection and beneficence—glorious in its capacity, and the instruments ready for use. Let but human nature, as the root of bitterness, be regenerated; and then all its capabilities, all its acquisitions and improvements, will be devoted to the most beneficent purposes, and will change the very aspect of the world. The state of the earth depends essentially on the character of its principal inhabitant: and when the character of man is renovated, the state of our world will be renovated also; the agencies, at present conflicting, will become conspiring; that which is barren will become fruitful; and that which is hurtful will become beneficent. We live in the lively expectation of a coming era, when the work which the first man failed to accomplish will be performed by the second man, which is Jesus Christ, and when it shall be sung, "How excellent is thy name in all the earth!"

SECONDLY, THE STATE OF MAN AFTER DEATH. The idea impressed on man by natural religion is, that he is under government. There is (1.) a law prescribed to him; and (2.) a God who upholds that law; then (3.) a consciousness of having broken that law; and (4.) a fear of punishment to be inflicted by the God whom he has offended. These four great truths of natural religion point to a fifth—that there is to be a final judgment. Every man feels as if he had, at the end of his earthly career, to appear before his Governor, and as if there was to be a reckoning at the close of the day of life. The time and manner of the judgment are unknown, but the judgment itself and the law are so far revealed. There is a feeling of this kind—originating in deep internal principles, and strengthened by the observation of the instances of retribution in the providence of God—haunting mankind all throughout their life, and coming on them, impressively, at a dying hour.

This we hold to be the grand central feeling of mankind, in reference to the world to come; it is an expectation, or rather an apprehension, of a day of reckoning. Such a day of accounts evidently implies a future world and a separate state. This, if we do not mistake, is by far the strongest argument for a future life. We believe it to be the one which, in fact, carries conviction to the minds of men. It is an argument which, like that in behalf of the existence of God, looks to various phenomena, internal and external, but these, in the one case as in the other, pointing to one conclusion.

Let it be observed, that we are not stating the argument in the common form, and maintaining that there is injustice in this world, which must be rectified in the next. We are not willing to allow that any one has a right to complain of injustice. There is in this world a government complete, so far as it goes, but not consummated. It is complete in this sense, that it is in exact adaptation to the character of man; but the character of man and the Divine administration in its reference to it, alike point to an ulterior conclusion, towards which all things tend. We see the process begun, but not ended—the progress, but not the termination; and we expect, at the close of the passage of life, to find a throne of judgment set, and an impartial judge seated upon it.

This is the argument which, whether they are able to state it or no, does carry conviction to the minds of mankind, and makes the belief in a future state so prevalent. It is an argument sufficient to make man feel his responsibility; for it reveals the law, and makes known the judge. We doubt much whether there be any other in favour of a future world, which can stand a sifting examination, when viewed as an independent argument. Yet when we have found such a firm basis in the government of God, other considerations worthy of being weighed come under our notice, and have all more or less of force. There is, for instance, the consciousness that the soul is not the body, and may not die with the body; nay, there is the feeling that it is so far independent of the body, that as it remains entire in the midst of the struggles of bodily dissolution, so it may remain entire when these struggles are ended. Socrates expressed this, when, in answer to the inquiry of his disciples, as to what they were to do with him after he was dead, he sportively remarked, "Just as you please; if only you can catch me, and I do not escape you."* Again, there is the shrinking from annihilation, and the strong tendency to believe in immortality. This feeling cannot arise from a longing after a continued enjoyment beyond the grave, for, alas! the anticipation has in it fully as much of fear as of hope. It seems to us to be a native belief springing from principles planted in our minds by him who made us. Not perhaps that is simple, original, or unaccountable; a number of separate intuitions seem to conspire to produce and strengthen it, and chiefly those derived from the sense of accountability, and the consciousness of spiritual personality. Still it may be regarded as a native feeling, and looks very much like an anticipation which guarantees a realization.

These arguments seem to us to have considerable force, which cannot be said of others that have been adduced. There is probably not a more sublime scene out of Scripture than that in which Socrates is represented as conversing with his disciples, on the day of his death, on the subject of the immortality of the soul. But much as we admire the conduct of Socrates on the occasion referred to, we are doubtful whether all the arguments employed by him are conclusive. That the soul existed before it came into the body, and will therefore exist after it leaves the body; that as life implies death, so death must imply life; these are arguments suited to the dialectic intellect of the Greeks, but scarcely fitted to work conviction in a doubting mind. The Girondist philosophers, on the evening before their execution, tried hard to be persuaded by them; but it is evident that there were deep anxieties preying on their minds,* from which they could have been relieved only by turning to the death followed by the resurrection of One infinitely greater than Socrates.

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* Plato's Phædo, 147.

That it is this belief in a coming judgment which is the deepest natural feeling, is evident from the conceptions entertained of the future world in the popular superstitions. The doctrine of the transmigration of souls appears in the earliest superstitions of the world, and has been entertained in all later ages by the most widely-diffused forms of heathenism. According to it, the soul, as a punishment, passes after death from one animal body to another. The Egyptians placed a searching judgment-day, conducted by Osiris, on the foreground of all their representations. The Greeks had a Minos and Rhadamanthus as judges in the region of the dead, and placed there the stone of Sisyphus, the sieve-drawing of Danaides, and the wheel of Ixion. The other world, in the common conceptions of mankind, has been the place of Shades, and has always had a Tartarus as well as an Elysium.

That the Governor of the world must call his creatures into judgment, this we believe to be a natural sentiment; but all beyond this, in relation to the state of the other world, comes from perverted tradition, from the fables of the priesthood, or the dreams of the wayward spirit of man—always excepting what comes from revelation.

Here again we find that revealed religion meets the felt wants of natural religion. When revelation draws aside the veil which separates this world from the other, we see, in exact accordance with our natural convictions, a throne of judgment. And the Bible gives certainty to what is but a dim anticipation; it is Christ that brings life and immortality to light. He does more; he shows how sinful man may come to that judgment-seat to be acquitted, and look forward to it without fear. The whole complex feeling with which man naturally regards the world to come is one of apprehension rather than of hope; it is a world of darkness rather than of light. Nor do we know any way by which these fears can be effectually dispelled but by the rays which the Sun of Righteousness sheds on the darkness of death and the sepulchre.

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* See Lamartine's Girondists, vol. iii.

Natural religion has been described by one party as a mere negation, or a mere syllabus of wants. By another party it has been represented as furnishing the basis to revealed religion. There is some truth, but there is more error, in each of these representations. Natural religion is not a mere negation; it gives a God and a government, and it anticipates a future day of retribution. We do not assert that in lands enjoying the light of Christianity, the idea of God is suggested by the works of nature; for it is obvious that in fact it is called forth in the minds of children by parents or guardians who appeal to God's word as well as his works. Nor do we mean to affirm that, in order to a rational belief in the Word of God, it is necessary that the Christian should have before him an argument in behalf of the existence and the government of God formally drawn out. But we are convinced that there are native intuitions in the mind, and palpable order and adaptation in the world, which constrain men to believe in a God, and help to lead them on to a reasonable belief in the Word as a revelation of his will; and farther, that it is of moment to have certain great truths of natural religion placed on a stable basis, in order thereby to have a ground-work on which to proceed in constructing a systematic defence of Christianity. The instincts of nature thus prepare us to believe in the revelations of heaven; and a scientific Natural Theology furnishes certain starting principles to Apologetic Theology. Thus far Natural Religion gives something positive. But then all its positive truths only remind man more impressively of what he needs. Its queries are far more instructive than its answers to them. It is of little use to any, unless it lead on to its true complement—to that sublime system of revelation in which all its wants are met and satisfied.

The principal office of natural religion should be, to point to Him who is the True Light. If it does not aim to accomplish this end, if it comes between any and that light, it may rather be pernicious. When it has succeeded in this, it may then disappear with its proofs and processes, and allow the eye to rest immediately on God. Such a treatise as this, if blessed from above, may be a finger-post to direct the inquirer—possibly the wanderer—in the right way, but when it has fulfilled this office, it should be lost sight of, as he goes on to the experimental knowledge and enjoyment of Him who alone can enlighten and satisfy the soul.

APPENDIX ON FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES.

ART. I.—LOGICAL NATURE OF THE THEISTIC ARGUMENT.

(PAGE 8 OF TEXT.)

WE are not entitled to demand of every one who believes in the being of a God, that he should be able to give an analysis of the argument which has convinced him. Every logician is prepared to acknowledge, that to have a reason for our conviction is one thing, and to be able to develop it, is a different thing. It is by a spontaneous process that the mind is led to believe in the existence of God; to state the argument in regular form is the business of natural theology as a science. When unfolded, the argument will be found to have both an intuitive (law of intelligence) and an observational element. There is the one, as well as the other of these, alike, in the so-called *a priori* and *a posteriori* arguments. In the rational (it does not profess to be *a priori*) demonstration of S. Clarke, there is a fact assumed, the existence of space and time, implying the existence of a substance of which they are modes (?). In that of Descartes there is also a fact assumed, that the mind has the idea of the perfect, implying, it is argued, (we think inconclusively,) the existence of a perfect being. Again, in the *a posteriori* argument, there are certain mental principles assumed, such as the necessary connexion of cause and effect. (This is shewn by Cousin, *Œuvres, Deux Ser.*, tome iii. Less. xxiv., &c.) In this country, natural theology has been chiefly engaged in unfolding the external element, and has given a beautiful exhibition of the adaptation of parts to be found in the universe. In another department of this same external evidence less has been done. The ancients argued the existence of God, not only from the *adaptation*, but from the *order* of the universe. This branch of proof must come once more into prominence, in consequence of the late discoveries in natural history, in regard to the homologies and homotypes found in the vegetable and animal structures. (See pp. 120-126.) The argument will be strengthened, when it is taken, as it can now be, from COMBINED ORDER AND ADAPTATION. (See p. 158.) But when fully unfolded, the argument will be found to imply certain internal principles. British Natural Theology seldom entered upon this field during the two or three past ages. Its aim was to give satisfactory external proof, that there exists an Intelligent Being who planned the universe, and in this it has succeeded. But Natural Theology must now go beyond this. It must defend the principle of intelligence, which leads us to argue from the effects in the world, that there is a cause above the world. It must do more. A distinction should be drawn between the evidence, in behalf of the existence of a Living Intelligent God, and that in behalf of his Infinity. The natural theologians of Britain have been anxious chiefly to establish the first point—the other being seldom denied. Hence they are reproached with putting more in the conclusion than they have given them in the premises, and arguing an infinite cause from a finite effect. The reproach is scarcely deserved; for all that they professed to do, was to prove the existence of an intelligent being in opposition to the atheist. Still it is needful, in order to the completion of the argument, that it should be shewn how we are constrained by an internal principle to look upon the intelligent God as infinite. Metaphysical philosophy will be able, we are convinced, to supply a statement and defence, both of the principles of Causation (see Art. III. and IV.) and of Infinity, (see Art. VI.), provided it proceeds, not in an *a priori* or critical, but in an inductive manner, to examine the intuitions of the human mind. The intuitions, it is true, are in the mind *a priori;* but their precise nature and value, and the truths guaranteed by them, can be determined only by inductive investigation.

Since the publication of the third edition of this work, we have had a farther expansion of Sir W. Hamilton's views, by the publication of his Discussions on Philosophy. The principles there laid down, cut up by the roots the common theistic arguments. Comparing his philosophy of the Conditioned with that of the Absolute, as evolved in Germany, he says, "In one respect both coincide, for both agree that the knowledge of Nothing is the principle or result of all true philosophy. 'Scire Nihil—studium quo nos laetamur utrique.' But the one doctrine maintaining that the Nothing must yield everything, is a philosophic omniscience; whereas the other holding that Nothing can yield nothing, is a philosophic nescience. In other words, the doctrine of the unconditioned is a philosophy confessing relative ignorance, but professing absolute knowledge; while the doctrine of the unconditioned is a philosophy professing relative knowledge, but confessing absolute ignorance," (p. 584, 1st ed.) Such a system renders it impossible to construct an argument in behalf of the Divine existence by means of man's intelligence. Taking up the same position as Kant, he says—"the only valid argument for the existence of God or the immortality of the soul, rests on the grounds of man's moral nature," (p. 595.) We are most unwilling to engage in an argument with this eminent man, not only because we feel ourselves inferior to him in learning and logical power,—not only because we must ever feel gratitude to him for the indulgent word spoken in behalf of this treatise when published; but mainly because of the service which he has rendered by his Appendix to Reid, which we reckon the most valuable contribution made in our day to philosophy. While still a living man, (and long may he be a living man among us,) he is acknowledged by all who are competent to judge, to have taken his place beside Descartes and Kant, and those men of other days who have done most to search the foundations of knowledge. But with these views as to human nescience, and the inconclusiveness of the common arguments in behalf of the Divine existence, we cannot coincide. We acknowledge that it is one good consequence of his philosophy, that it shews "that no difficulty emerges in theology which had not previously emerged in theology," (p. 584.) But his doctrine of relativity, more especially in its application to cause and effect, really leaves us nothing by which to prove that God exists. We cannot see how even the moral argument remains, if "good and evil" are subject, as they must be, to the same all-sweeping system of relativity and nescience. It will be needful then, in these Articles, to utter our dissent from the principles laid down in the Discussions.

Sir W. Hamilton (in his Discussions) is the Kant of Scotland and of the nineteenth century. His followers now form a considerable school, all agreeing in this, that man's knowledge is simply of the relative. Those of them who have carried their speculations into theology, feeling that human intelligence or reason cannot prove the existence of God, seem to be inclined to call in an intuitive faith in God, in much the same way as Schleiermacher called in a God consciousness to save himself from the nihilism of Kant, (it is curious to observe how the old phases of philosophy return.) This seems to be the position taken up by the gentleman, who, of late years, writes the metaphysical articles (characterized by a fine, though somewhat winding vein of reflection) in the North British Review, and by Mr. Calderwood, in his spirited work on the Philosophy of the Infinite. But this faith or consciousness must be either of something unconditioned, in which case it is inconsistent with the theory of relativity, or it must be of something relative, conditioned, finite, in which case it cannot be a faith in an infinite God. We are convinced that the common arguments, if properly unfolded, are valid, and that all the difficulties and supposed contradictions, which these gentlemen fear so much, are self-created, and spring from an error which has crept somewhere into their fundamental principle. We see no occasion to call in a "mysterious faith" to assure us of the existence of God; his existence, as it appears to us, can be proven by obvious observations of facts, aided by principles implied and employed in the common affairs of life, and acknowledged in all metaphysical systems. There is wisdom in the statement of Leibnitz :—"Almost all the means which have been employed to prove the existence of God are good, and are capable of serving their end, if only perfected."—Nouv. Essais, Liv. IV. c. x.

ART. II.—ON THE PROPERTIES OF MATTER.—(PAGES 77 AND 97.)

The qualities of matter are, according to Locke, of three sorts, the primary, the secondary, and those by which one body acts upon another. (Essay, B. ii. c. 8, § 8-10.) In the text we have treated solely of the third of these classes. Sir W. Hamilton has also a three-fold division. There are the primary, which are all evolved from two catholic conditions of matter, the occupying of space and the being contained in space. There are the secundo-primary, which have a relation to space and motion in space, are all contained under the category of resistance or pressure, and are three in number, co-attraction, repulsion, inertia. There are the secondary, which belong to bodies only so far as they are thought to be capable of specifically determining the various parts of our nervous apparatus. (Appendix to Reid, Note D.) These classifications are valuable mainly for metaphysical purposes, and are at best to be regarded as provisional. Physical science, and it alone, can settle some of the questions started, and it must advance several stages and tell us more of the correlation of forces, of polar action, of chemical affinity, of heat, electricity, and colour, before we can have anything like even a seemingly adequate classification of the properties of matter.

All these arrangements seem to us defective in this respect, that they omit, or at least do not explicitly include, power, active property, force, dynamical energy. It seems clear to us, that we cannot know material objects—that we cannot know our own organism or bodies out of it except as exercising property, that is, power. Just as we know matter in our primary cognitions as extended, so we also know it as exercising property. Active property then is entitled to be placed among the primary, or at least among the secundo-primary qualities of matter. In this respect physical science is far in advance of the metaphysics which still clings to the doctrine of Descartes, and represents matter as altogether passive, and its single fundamental quality to be the occupation of space. The later disclosures of physics clearly prove that matter has a δύναμις. And yet the dynamical theory of matter is equally defective, inasmuch as it commonly omits the occupation of space, which is an equally essential attribute of matter, and inasmuch as it confines the activity of matter to force, whereas it seems to possess active properties of various kinds.

In the midst of all the changes of material objects, there are two things that abide—the substances abide, and the qualities abide. Allotropism may seem an exception. It is ascertained that two bodies possessing the same chemical composition may exhibit very different properties. Thus common phosphorus is yellowish, pliable, soft, can hardly be handled with impunity, and assumes a particular form when crystallized, whereas allotropic phosphorus is almost black, brittle, and hard, can be handled without danger, and assumes a crystalline form belonging to a different system. We are evidently not yet at the bottom of this subject. It is a more striking illustration than we ever had before of the fact, that the same substances may exist in different states, and that all properties need conditions to call them forth. We do not know in respect of what, the bodies, the same in chemical composition, differ from each other, whether in atomic disposition or difference produced by heat or other latent energy. But that the substances have not been transmuted, is evident from the circumstance, that the body changed from one state to a second can be brought back from the second to the first, when it exhibits the very same properties as it did before it was changed.

For metaphysical purposes, the distinction of most moment is between our original and our acquired perceptions. We agree with Sir W. Hamilton in thinking that our original perceptions are probably of our bodily frame, or of our organism and of bodies in contact with it; all beyond this seems to be acquired. In all such perceptions there must be knowledge; it is not a mere apprehension, idea, notion, or impression—none of these words express the mental act, but it is knowledge; not abstract or general knowledge, but knowledge of individual objects in their concrete state. In the very perception of our organism we must know our bodies as extended, and we may add, as exercising active power. Our acquired knowledge proceeds upon this original knowledge, and becomes the knowledge of linear distance and of various kinds of active property. Now it appears to us, that the natural realist may lay down the principle that all our original principles are true, that is, that the thing corresponds to our apprehension, or rather knowledge of it. If he cannot prove this, he may at least defy disproof, and affirm that our intuition guarantees the reality. In adding acquired to our original perceptions, we lay down rules derived from experience, and come habitually to proceed upon them. These rules are of great use, and lead to no error in cases similar to those from which they were derived, but may land us in mistakes when extended to other cases. Thus we lay down the rule that when we feel ourselves to be at rest, and an image of an object moves over the retina of the eye, this object is in motion. This rule is correct enough while we are on land, but fails us when we are in a ship moving away from the shore, for it leads us to think that the shore is moving. If these views be correct, it is wrong to say that the senses deceive us, for our original perceptions do not deceive us; when we are misled it is by an improper application of rules formed by ourselves; and it is interesting to notice, that as it is experience which has led us to form the rules, so experience can determine the legitimate use and limits of them.

It is a very important circumstance that the later discoveries of physical science go to shew that our senses, that is, our original perceptions, are trustworthy. Our senses seem to say that there is a reality (they do not say what) in heat, and the same truth is now acknowledged in physical science, which affirms that the heat which came from the sun in the geological æra of the coal measures, was absorbed by the plants, and is actually laid up in store in the coal-beds, and is ready to come out in our fires, and to produce or to constitute mechanical force. The main difficulty of natural realism arises from colour. Idealism has ever derived its chief argument from this phenomenon. In ancient times it argued from the crooked appearance of a stick in the water; this difficulty is obviated by modern discovery, which shews that direction is not one of our original perceptions. It still argues that the eye adds colour which is not in the object. Yet surely in all this it is arguing from what is unknown, as if it were known. We know how the sensation of colour is produced in us,—it is by rays reflected from the object and falling on our organism; but we know not what makes the object reflect rays, and reflect one ray rather than another, in short, we know not what colour in the object is. "Colour," says Cousin, (Review of Locke, Less. xxiii.,) "is perhaps more inherent in body than is commonly believed." Speaking of this subject, the highest authority in our country on the subject of colour says, "It may perhaps be ultimately found that nature does not play the fool with our senses: but that the last accomplishments of science coincide with common apprehension." (Field's Chromatology, p. 66.) We have shewn (p. 129) that colours are apt to come out in plants complementary to each other. There must be a physical cause of this general fact. May it not be that when the white beam falls on the plant, certain of the rays are reflected, whereas the others are absorbed, and are ready to come out on certain conditions being fulfilled, in much the same way as heat was absorbed by plants in the geological ages? Thus when the white beam falls on the purple petals of a flower, the purple ray will be repelled on the principle of like repelling like, whereas the complementary yellow will be absorbed, and will come out in the yellow heart. This hypothesis supposes that there is some sort of reality (we do not say what) in colour, but is in no way inconsistent with the Newtonian theory, for it regards colour as discoverable by us only by means of the reflexion of light—only it assumes that there is a colour potency in the object, to reflect the like colour, according to the law of polar forces, that like repels like. But apart from this altogether, the idealist is not entitled to urge colour in defence of his theory, as long as we know so little of what makes bodies reflect rays, and one body to reflect one ray and another body a different ray.

ART. III.—RELATION BETWEEN CAUSE AND EFFECT IN THE PHYSICAL WORLD.—(PAGE 81.)

In offering some remarks on this subject, we are anxious that it should be understood that we are speaking solely of the nature of the relation between cause and effect, and not at all of the mental principle by which we come to discover that relation—of the objective relation, and not at all of the subjective idea. Many errors have arisen from confounding these two things; and these errors appear again and again in the speculations of those who have derived their views directly or indirectly from the great German metaphysician Kant. Upon the latter, or the internal principle, the German school of philosophy has thrown some light; but we are at present speaking of another topic which they have contrived to confuse—the real relation between cause and effect in the external world.

"Every effect has a cause," is the axiom; but the words *cause* and *effect* are ambiguous, particularly the word *effect*. The aphorism understood in one sense is a mere truism or identical proposition, and may mean nothing more than that every "effect," that is, every phenomenon which has a phenomenon before it, has a phenomenon before it. But the proposition is more than a truism. What is meant by it? What is the exact truth set forth?

Dr. T. Brown, following out and connecting the speculations of Hume, has proven to a demonstration, that there is and can be nothing intermediate between cause and effect. He has shown that cause and effect are joined as the links of a chain, coming into immediate contact, and with nothing between. In doing so, he has cleared away much cumbrous and confusing error—but has he established and clearly defined the positive truth? With a mind of unequalled sharpness of edge, he could cut into parts that which others thought to be indivisible; but it may be doubted whether that edge, through its excessive keenness, was not sometimes bent back when directed to certain solid matters, which require to be inspected and described rather than to be divided or analyzed.*

He endeavours to prove that cause and effect have no other connexion than this—that the one is the invariable antecedent, and the other the invariable consequent. We believe that no one disputes the existence of the invariable sequence as at least one element in the relation. But it is not so universally acknowledged that there is nothing else. Most persons, unable, as they acknowledge, to say where the deficiency lies, have felt that the theory is bare and unsatisfactory; and that, if it does not miss the truth, it does not at least give a full exhibition of it. It is possible that, in the theory under review, Dr. Brown may have got the truth, but not the whole truth.

When we assert that every effect has a cause, so far as we do not play upon words, or utter a mere truism, we are affirming something in regard to *existing things*. We always rejoice to bring down abstractions to actual objects. When we do so, we feel that we have a surer footing to stand on. Let us come to existing things, and examine them with the view of determining what is really said of them, when we affirm that every effect has a cause.

Do we mean that every existing thing has a consequent, and every existing thing an antecedent, and both necessary, to use the old phraseology, or invariable, to use that of Brown? Does it mean that every existing thing (A) is succeeded by an existing thing (B), and that every existing thing (B) is preceded by an existing thing (A), and that this existing thing (A) will always be followed by the existing thing (B), and, *vice versa*, that this given existing thing (B) has always the same existing thing (A) before it? We doubt much if the mind is prepared at once to admit so broad an axiom as this, however expressed. Suppose there were nothing in the universe but some simple unformed substance, such as a piece of earth or metal, would it have been followed by something else—or could we, on the mere inspection of such a substance, have argued that there must have been something before it? Dr. Brown gives a clear, and, as it appears to us, right answer to this question, when he says, "that matter, as an unformed mass existing without relation of parts, could not of itself have suggested the notion of a Creator, since in every hypothesis something material or mental must have existed uncaused, and mere existence, therefore, is not necessarily a mark of previous causation, unless we take for granted an infinite series of causes." (Phil. of Hum. Mind, Lect. 92.)

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* The language of Seneca (De Benef.,) applied to Chrysippus the Stoic, may be applied to Dr. Brown—"Magnum mehercule virum, sed tamen Graecum, cujus acumen nimis tenue retunditur, et in se saepe replicatur, etiam cum agere aliquid pungit, non perforat."

"Every effect has a cause," is the aphorism. What do we mean by an effect? If we analyze it, it will always be found to imply a change, or something new. Dr. Brown admits that an unformed mass could not of itself have suggested the idea of a cause, and that there must be something uncaused. But let this mass be seen springing into being, or let it be seen assuming a new form, and the idea of a cause is at once suggested. We must limit the general maxim accordingly. When we say that every effect has a cause, we do not mean that every existing thing has an antecedent, invariable or necessary. There is something new implied in the very conception of effect—it is something effected, something which did not exist before or put in a new state. Whenever such a phenomenon is brought under cognizance, the mind rises intuitively to the belief in a cause.

Having endeavoured to limit and define what is meant by an effect, let us now attempt to determine what is meant by a cause.

Looking as before at existing things, we find substances with their several properties. Dr. Brown has endeavoured to show that substance is nothing but "the co-existence of certain qualities."* Into this speculation, which is very much a verbal one, we do not feel ourselves called to enter. We assume the existence of substances, material and spiritual, possessing their several properties, or, if any prefer the statement, composed of their several properties cohering together. Now, a cause is always to be found in some existing thing, or in a substance spiritual or material, simple or compound. In producing its effects, that substance produces a new substance, or a change upon some existing substance; and we are led to the conclusion that existing things, in producing new existences, or changes on old existences, act according to certain definite rules, which it is the business of experience to discover. The same existing thing, in the same state, is always followed by the same change in that existing thing, or in some other existing thing. The same existing substance in the same state is always followed by the same change, and *vice versa*, the change always presupposes the same pre-existing substance.

When we discover what are the precise changes or productions resulting from a given substance, we call this a property of the substance, and we know that this substance in the given state will ever produce this change or exercise this quality. It is the office of observation and experience to discover the properties of objects.

We are now in circumstances to define more accurately the ideas contained in the words *cause* and *effect*. There is the idea of *universal sequence, but there is something more definite.* Dr. Brown challenges those who affirm that there is something more than invariable antecedence and consequence, to say what it is. We answer the call, and affirm, that in a cause there is *a substance acting according to its powers or properties.* Again, in every effect there is a change or a new object. We are far from saying that Dr. Brown denies what we now state. There are passages in his work which show that he might have been driven to admit all that we now affirm; but still we think that he has not fully brought out the whole truth. Had he done so, we are convinced that his theory would have recommended itself more readily to the mind, because it would have been felt to accord with our cherished convictions.

Cousin has discovered what we now refer to, as existing in the causes which reside in the human mind. "The internal principle of causation, in developing itself in its acts, retains that which makes it the principle, and the cause, and is not absorbed in its effects."† But he has not observed (because, like all who have become involved in the abstractions of Kant, he has fixed his attention too much on the subjective) that the same remark is true of material substances: and that, in producing their effects, they retain the property which they exercised, and are ready anew to produce the same effects.

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* Note C, p. 498.

† Leçon V. (Cours, 1828.)

Dr. Brown has shown, beyond the possibility of a refutation, that in the production of changes there is truly nothing but the substances that change and are changed. Mix them as we please, "the substances that exist in a train of phenomena are still, and must always be, the whole constituents of the train."* But he has not shown so fully as he might how much is implied in these substances. The German metaphysicians are right in affirming that power is implied in our very idea of substance; and Dr. Brown, in one passage, admits, though casually, the same thing when he says, "All this regularity of succession is assumed in our very notion of substance as existing."† These philosophers might have farther affirmed, that there is power in the very nature of a substance as well as in our idea of it. This power, these properties of substances, are permanently in them, and ready to be exercised at all times. With the exception of those who deny the existence of an external world, all admit that properties are of an abiding nature, and constantly resident in the substance. We thus arrive at a power in nature, constant and permanent, and ever ready to be exercised. We cannot, perhaps, speak of a cause as existing when not exercised; but we can most assuredly speak of a power abiding, whether exercised or not—that power abiding in every substance that comes under our notice, and in the very nature of the substance itself, as it is implied in the very idea of substance.‡

Taking these views along with us, we free ourselves from the impression left in reading such a work as that of Brown on Cause and Effect; that impression being one of events proceeding in pairs or couples, the latter member of one couple forming the first member of the next. When we introduce substance and qualities, the idea of a chain is now got rid of, with all its offensive and misleading associations, and we find ourselves instead, in the heart of multiplied harmonies, requiring a divine skill in order to their maintenance, and exhibiting that skill in every department of God's works.

The doctrine now expounded is fitted, we conceive, to clear up and strengthen the argument in behalf of the existence of God. The axiom, that every effect has a cause, stated in this loose form, seems to involve us in several difficulties in regard to the Theistic argument. The sceptic, proceeding upon it, would shut us up to the alternative—of affirming that every existence has a cause, and thence he would drive us to the conclusion, that God himself must have a cause, and that there is an infinite succession of causes; or if we limit our assertion, and say that every existence has not a cause, it is immediately hinted that the world may be uncaused. Now we have rid ourselves from the horns of this dilemma, by the view which we have given both of effect and of cause. An "effect" involves something new; there is change implied in our very idea of it. It is in regard to such a phenomenon that we infer that it must have a cause—and such, every one admits, are all the phenomena in the world. We are warranted, then, to conclude, in regard to all such phenomena, that they must have a cause. We thence rise through a succession of causes to the purpose of an intelligent Being. We are required to go no farther, according to the explanation of cause which we have given. All power, we have seen, resides in a substance, and we trace all the instances of contrivance in the world to God, as a substance. We now rest in an *unchanging spiritual Being*, capable of producing all the effects which we see in the universe.

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* Brown on Cause and Effect, p. 29.

† Ibid. p. 143.

‡ Of all persons, Dr. Brown should be the readiest to grant this, as he supposes that substance is the mere co-existence of qualities; and it follows, that if qualities were to cease, then substance would cease also. There are passages in which he seems to acknowledge all that we say in the text, as when he says, "that subtances abide, and qualities abide;" and that "qualities are just another name for the power of affecting other substances." (P. 142.) Yet, in direct contradiction, he affirms (p. 176), "that power is not something latent that exists whether exercised or not—there is strictly no power that is not exerted."

But to return to the subject discussed in the text, we find in the examination of material causes that they always imply two or more distinct bodies, as do also the effects. There is an inconceivable amount of confusion in the common conceptions on this subject. When a hammer is made to strike a stone and break it, the cause is not, as is commonly supposed, the stroke of the hammer, and the effect, the fracture of the stone. The cause, properly speaking, consists of the hammer and stone in a particular state and relation, and the effect, the hammer and stone in another state. These are the real invariable, antecedent, and consequent—the cause tied for ever to its effect. The cause always consists of a plurality of substances in a certain state, and the effect consists of the same substances in another state. In order to the action, or rather the existence of a cause, these substances must be in a certain relation, so as to admit of the operation of the powers or qualities residing in them; and it is only when they exist in this relation, that the effect will be produced. We shall show in another section of this Appendix (VII.), how mental causes operate differently in this respect from material causes, in that the former require the presence of only one substance, the one indivisible substance—mind with its faculties; and how the independent and self-acting power of mind is one of its most striking properties, and that by which it is pre-eminently distinguished from matter.

QUERY.—Does it not seem as if some of the laws of motion were but partial statements of more comprehensive laws? A body continues in the state in which it is, whether of motion or of rest, for ever, unless operated upon *ab extra*. Is not this but a part of the more general law, that matter is inert, in regard to all its properties, till operated upon by something foreign to itself?

Is not the second law of motion, that of action being equal to reaction, just a larger law seen under a particular aspect—this second larger law being the positive, and the other, before considered, the negative? In order to the production of any effect, chemical as well as mechanical, there is required the presence of two or more substances with their qualities, and in the production of the effects, both bodies are changed, or rather the effect consists in the change made on the two bodies. That body which changes another is itself changed, and that which is itself changed, changes that by which it is changed. Not only so, but the change in both bodies is of the same description—[this may be doubted];—if chemical in the one, it is chemical in the other; if mechanical in the one, it is mechanical in the other. May it not also be, that the change in the one is equal to the change in the other, and thus the law of action and reaction may be extended to the exercise of every property of matter?

If so, might not this extensive law be employed to explain some of the curious phenomena of chemical equivalents, and of the polar forces, in which it will be found that action in the particles of matter is always opposed by an equal reaction. The more we reflect on the subject, we are the more convinced that what are called polar forces are just the manifestation of the reciprocal action of two bodies on each other.

ART. IV.—INTERNAL PRINCIPLE OF CAUSATION.—(PAGE 113.)

The correspondence traced in the text, proceeds on the doctrine that the belief in the relation of Cause and Effect is intuitive. This has been the catholic creed of metaphysicians. All science seems ultimately to rest on first truths or fundamental principles not derived from experience, but rather laws of intelligence enabling us to gather experience. Among these, the principle of causation deserves to be placed. It bears the marks of intuitive truth. First, it is necessary. But the most lengthened experience cannot give this necessity. However long Sirius may have preceded the heat of summer, we would not look on the connexion as necessary,—we can easily conceive the two to be severed. But we cannot be made to believe that there is an effect without a cause; that the heat would come without a power to produce it. Mr. J. S. Mill, indeed, tells us, (Logic, B. iii. c. xxi. § 1,) that he can "find no difficulty in conceiving, that in some one of the many firmaments into which sidereal astronomy now divides the universe, events may succeed one another at random without any fixed law. Nor can any thing in our experience, or in our mental nature, constitute a sufficient, or indeed any reason, for believing that this is nowhere the case." This statement about fixed laws is ambiguous. If by fixed law be meant simply order, and uniformity among physical events, the statement is true. But if meant to signify an event without a cause, material or mental, natural or supernatural, the statement is contradicted by our "mental nature," which impels us to seek for a cause of every event. He is right in affirming that "experience" cannot authorize such a belief; but it is just as certain that our "mental nature" constrains us to entertain it—and surely if there be laws in physical nature, there may also be trustworthy laws in our mental nature. Mr. Mill has improved the account given by Brown, of the relation between cause and effect; he says, it is not enough that it should be invariable, it must be unconditional. We accept the phrase; the mind looks upon the relation as unconditional; and when it notices an effect, looks for an unconditional cause. Secondly, the belief is universal,—that is, all men spontaneously act upon it. Mr. Mill tells us that it is arrived at by induction, from a simple enumeration of cases, that it was late in the history of the world before it was established, and that even now we are not entitled to receive it "as a law of the universe, but of that portion of it only which is within the range of our means of observation, with a reasonable degree of extension to adjacent cases." (§ 5.) Now, all this is true of the mere order, general law, or uniformity of nature. Our belief in it is simply the result of experience; it was long before men entertained it, and we should be prepared to acknowledge that there may be exceptions, nay, we have such exceptions attested in the creation of new species of animals, and in the miracles of Scripture. But this is not the case with our belief in the relation of cause and effect; the infant acts upon it as well as the mature man, the savage as confidently as the civilized, and when men saw no natural, they called in a supernatural cause; and even now we call in the fiat of God to account for the creation of new species of organisms, and the miracles of the Word of God. (See pp. 114, 156.)

The following is the account which we are inclined to give of the causal judgment. We cannot, as it appears to us, know any substance, except as possessing power. We cannot, for example, know self, except as active, as a potency. Nay, we cannot know material objects except as active. In our primitive knowledge of our bodily frames, we know them not only as extended, but exercising active property. (See Art. II.) A considerable amount of the very highest authority might be quoted in behalf of the doctrine, that power is implied in substance. It is the expressed doctrine of Leibnitz, who says, that acting force is inherent in all substance, and that this is true of substances called corporeal, as well as of spiritual substances. (De primæ philosophiæ emendatione et notione substantiæ.) Kant admits the doctrine, without being able to follow it out. "Where there is Action, consequently activity and force, there also is substance; and in this last alone must the seat of that fruitful source of phenomena be found." (Analogies and Experience in Kritik, Haywood's Translation, p. 167.) It is a fundamental principle of Ulrici, a living German metaphysician. (See Das Grundprincip der Philos. und System der Logik.) It is a maxim all but universally acknowledged, that we know substances by their properties; but what are properties but particular kinds of powers? Power being thus one element in our primary concrete cognition of objects, we are led to believe that substances operate, and that all operations must proceed from powers in a substance. We have in Article VI. given what we regard as the correct psychological genesis of some of the more important intuitive principles. It will be seen from the account there given, that we regard the Simple Cognitive Faculties as cognizing Substance and Quality in the concrete. Proceeding upon this knowledge, we have a faculty leading us upon an effect, being brought under our notice to look for a cause, and *vice versa.* Substance and Property are given primarily in simple cognition, and Cause and Effect in a necessary judgment proceeding on this cognition. Substance and Property are thus the groundwork of Causation, both in themselves and in regard to our apprehension of them.

We regard Sir W. Hamilton's representation of Causation as defective, and his resolution of it into a wide principle of relativity, or law of the conditioned, as a failure. "The phænomenon is this:—When aware of a new appearance, we are unable to conceive that therein has originated any new existence, and are therefore constrained to think that what now appears under a new form, had previously an existence under others." (Discussions, p. 585.) With all deference, this is not the mental phenomenon. Our appeal lies to consciousness; and it seems to us to intimate, that on a new fact (not appearance) presenting itself, the mind seeks, not necessarily for the same thing or existence under another form, but for some thing or substance previously existing having power to produce the effect. It may find the power in the same existence, but it may also find it in another existence. He tells us, "that when an object is given, we are unable to think it non-existent—to think it away—to annihilate it in thought." (P. 591.) "We are compelled to believe that the object, (that is, the certain *quale* and *quantum* of existence,) whose phænomenal rise into existence we have witnessed, did really exist prior to this rise under other forms. But to say that a thing previously existed under different forms, is only to say in other words that a thing had causes." (Pp. 593, 594.) Carrying out this view to its legitimate consequences, he affirms, "We think the causes to contain all that is contained in the effect; the effect to contain nothing but what is contained in the causes. Each is the sum of the other." (P. 585.) There is surely an oversight here. This account of the mental thought or belief, is all too narrow and inadequate. We acknowledge that as an empirical observation, we ever find new material forms springing out of the same existences under a different form. But this empirical observation is not the intuitive principle. The pantheistic doctrine, which derives existence in any one mode, from the same existence in another mode, is founded on the exclusive observation of material phenomena, and does not proceed on the principles of reason or intuition. Let us conceive a soul springing into existence. Do we necessarily look upon it as an emanation, and derive it from the same existence in another form? What we seek, if we interpret our consciousness aright, is power to produce it, and this we may find in quite another existence. We can also conceive of the creation of an atom or a world, and what the mind demands is not an evolution of the one or other out of the same existences, but of a power in a substance,—say God, to produce the effect. Holding Sir W. Hamilton's representation of the mental phenomenon to be radically defective, we reckon his resolution of it into the law of relativity as unsatisfactory. He derives it not from a "*positive power*," but a "*negative impotence*," not from a "*particular force*," but a "*general imbecility*." (P. 594.) No wonder, when such is his view of causation, that he cannot derive an argument in behalf of the Divine existence from human intelligence. The very *differentia* of causation is left out in a system which represents it as an incapacity to conceive that observation should cease when we have traced effects as far as our observation can reach; it is a belief that there is a something beyond to produce the effect that last meets our view. We are strongly of opinion, that the mental principle is not an impotency, but a potency, not an inability to conceive that absolutely new existences should spring into being, but a necessary thought, conviction, or belief, that should they arise, they must have proceeded from an existence—a substance with power to produce them. This is with us an intuitive principle, constraining belief in the first instance, and ever confirmed by experience. It declares that when the effect is real, the cause must also be real, and is quite sufficient to entitle us to rise from the effects in nature, to a power in an existence above nature. But this Being above nature, bears no marks of being an effect, our intuition rests satisfied, and goes back no farther.

We can thus meet the objection urged with great logical power by Kant. (Antinomies of Pure Reason in Kritik.) "Causality of the cause is thus ever again something that happens and renders necessary your *regressus* to a still higher cause, consequently the prolongation of the series of phenomena *a parte priori* unceasingly." In enlarging on this topic, he breaks forth into a passage of grim eloquence. "We cannot guard against the thought, yet, also, we cannot bear it, that a Being which we represent to ourselves as the highest among all possible, should say, as it were to itself,—'I am from Eternity to Eternity, besides me there is nothing except that which is something merely by my will.' 'But whence am I then?' Here every thing sinks away under us, and the greatest perfection, like the smallest, floats without support from speculative reason." This objection derives its force from an erroneous apprehension, that is induction of causation. Proceeding not in an inductive, but a critical method, Kant has landed himself in contradictions, and then charges the contradictions which are to be found only in his own representations upon human reason.* He says, that proceeding on the principle of causation, there must be a *regressus ad infinitum*. It is at this point that we meet him. We hold that the intuition goes back to a substance in which power resides, but that on reaching this point it is satisfied. It may be questioned, indeed, whether that substance or existence is not also an effect. If it be, the intuition again requires us to look for a cause in a power dwelling in some substance. But when we at last reach a substance which bears no traces of being an effect, we may stop, for the mind is satisfied. Kant himself announces truths, which, if prosecuted, might have led him to see this. He allows, as we have seen, that power implies substance. He farther states that substance and quality, unlike other categories, does not require an infinite *regressus*. When we have found a power in the Divine Being adequate to produce all the effects which we see in the universe, the *regressus* ceases. There is no contradiction then in the idea of a First Cause. We cannot stop till we reach such a cause, or to use the old nomenclature, a self-sufficient power, a self-existent Being, or better still, "I AM THAT I AM"; but having reached this point the mind feels that it can rest. This is the true Absolute which the German speculatists are ever seeking and never finding. Our analysis of the internal principle, thus brings us to the same conclusion as that of the external relation, and leads us to trace up all the activity of the universe, to a Being who has Power in Himself. "Twice have I heard this, that power belongeth unto God."

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* It might be shewn that this holds true of all the Antinomies of Pure Reason adduced by Kant. The contradiction lies in the representations given of them, and not in the principles themselves as they exist in our constitutions. When the native principles are carefully inducted and expressed, the contradiction disappears.

Art. V.—THE LIVING WRITERS WHO TREAT OF THE PRINCIPLES OF THE INDUCTIVE PHILOSOPHY.—(Page 165.)

(1.) Sir John Herschel's discourse on the study of Natural Philosophy is admirable so far as it goes, but does not profess to discuss the philosophic principles of the Inductive Sciences.

(2.) We like the phrase by which M. Comte (see pp. 4, 105, 165, 240) designates his work, The Positive Philosophy, and every one is constrained to admire his penetrating intellect and his clear style. He professes to rear a philosophy of facts co-ordinated apart from abstractions, but he has overlooked a most important class of facts. He is willing to attend to the senses, but will not pay any regard to the consciousness; he assumes the existence of matter, but denies the existence of mind, except as a physiological process. He is the embodiment of the materialistic tendencies of his age and nation. He occupies very much the same position in this century as Hume did in the last, and Hobbes did in the previous one—differing, however, from them, as much as the nineteenth century differs from the eighteenth and the seventeenth. In mathematics and various branches of natural philosophy he displays great clearness and shrewdness; but, led by a spirit of haughty dogmatism, as unphilosophical as it is often profane, he errs palpably and egregiously in supposing that these sciences exhaust the whole of existence that can fall under our notice. According to his grand generalization, so lauded by his admirers, philosophy, in its early stages is theological, then metaphysical, and finally positive. In modern Europe it has reached, he supposes, this third stage—which is that of manhood—and so has superseded the two former stages of infancy and childhood, which have for ever passed away. This appears to us to be as rash a generalization as ever was made by any German theorist. When scientific inquiry commenced, a great number of topics had to be discussed at one and the same time; these were afterwards separated on the principle of the Division of Labour, which has acted as important a part in science, as in the advancement of national wealth. At first theology, metaphysics, and physics, and other sciences besides, were blended together, and then they came to be treated apart. There is merit in Comte's classification of the physical sciences, if not carried too far, as shewing how certain sciences came before others; but there may be sciences not only of matter but of mind, such as Psychology, Logics, Ethics, Metaphysics, &c. It argues great narrowness of mind, to suppose, that any one of the separate sciences, or sets of sciences, is entitled to supersede the others. Theology may be made as positive a science as any branch of physics, and if mind exists—as consciousness declares—there may always be a positive psychological science. There should in every age be a theological, a metaphysical, and a physical philosophy. We should certainly like to see the other two made as positive as M. Comte has sought to make physical science.

(3.) Exactly the counterpart, in every respect, of the positive philosophy are the two works of Whewell on the History and the Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences, (see Review, pp. 107-111.) The great merit of the latter consists in showing that the mind must bring with it certain Fundamental Ideas and Conceptions, (we would rather say capacities with principles involved in them,) in order to the investigation of external nature. All physical research presupposes, he maintains, the possession of fundamental ideas, such as those of space, time, cause, outness of objects, and media of perception of secondary qualities, polarity, chemical composition and affinity, substance, likeness and natural affinity, means and ends, symmetry and vital powers. In following this course, he has done unspeakable service to modern science, which, in attending to the objective, has been much disposed to leave the subjective out of view. We are inclined to think, however, that he magnifies the subjective, in much the same way as Kant did, beyond what it ought to be. He seems to think that these ideas, in physical investigation, furnish laws which are not in nature itself. "Observed facts are connected so as to produce new truths, by superinducing upon them an idea."—(Aphorisms concerning Ideas, xi.) These ideas or capacities seem to us to be rather the means of enabling us to discover what is in nature. He also errs by referring to *a priori* principles, not a few truths, evidently derived from observation.

(4.) Worthy of being ranked with either of the two last, is the Treatise on Logic, by John S. Mill, (see pp. 81, 88, 104, 420.) In respect of the attention paid to the subjective, he ranks higher than M. Comte, but considerably lower than Whewell. He admits consciousness as a source of knowledge, but does not seem to us to have fully studied the revelations of consciousness. He does not profess to deal with the "original data or ultimate premises of our knowledge, with their number or nature, or the tests by which they may be distinguished." (Introd.) Yet there is a metaphysical system derived partly from Dr. T. Brown, partly from Mr. James Mill, and partly from Comte, underlying all his principles, and breaking out from time to time. He acknowledges that there are truths known directly and of themselves, by "intuition" and "immediate consciousness," (Introd.), but he does not see that there must be laws involved in the "mental nature" which is capable of such knowledge. He derives not only the law of cause and effect, but mathematical axioms, from the induction of sensible experience; and if he carry out his principles he must be prepared to acknowledge, that in other worlds not only that there may be no causation, but that two parallel lines may meet—for experience cannot go out into these other worlds and say anything on the subject. We regret that at times he has allowed himself to follow too implicitly the delusive simplicity of M. Comte, whom he so much admires. He is obliged, indeed, to talk of permanent causes and primeval causes, and original collocations.—(B. III. chap. v. xxii.) These permanent causes are substances possessing properties; these collocations are the dispositions made in order to enable the substances to act beneficially. But being afraid to admit, in an unqualified manner, the existence of properties and the power of causation, his work distinguished throughout by clearness and utility, is in some portions of it perplexed and unsatisfactory.

ART. VI.—SCHEME OF INTUITIVE INTELLECTUAL PRINCIPLES CONSIDERED PSYCHOLOGICALLY.—(PAGE 264.)

I. In drawing out the scheme of intellectual faculties in the text, we have taken somewhat from the precious hints scattered throughout the writings of Sir W. Hamilton. In one important point we differ from him. We think that consciousness should have a place among the mental attributes. Two reasons may be given for this:—First, it looks to a special object, viz., self; secondly, it is a separate source of knowledge, ideas, or notions, viz., of thoughts, feelings, &c. It was one great merit of Locke, that he represented reflection as a source of ideas. Condillac departed far from Locke when he omitted it. Kant has herein fallen into the very error of Condillac. Overlooking consciousness, he represents sense as alone furnishing intuitions, and he is never able to supply this defect in the foundation by the innumerable artificial buttresses added. We may give consciousness a separate name and place, without meaning to degrade it to the level of the other faculties. In some respects it is superior to them all, having in it more of the essence of the soul, and being exercised whenever the soul is exercised.

II. In the chart of mental powers we have supposed that there are certain faculties of simple cognition, by which we know actually existing individual objects in the concrete: such as perception, which gives the knowledge of material objects, and consciousness, by which we have the knowledge of self in given states. We speak in this way; for it is utterly inadequate language which represents the mind in these operations as having merely an impression, or an idea—it has already knowledge. In the exercise of these faculties we have already a number of intellectual intuitions, all however in the individual and in the concrete. Thus in perception we know the object as a substance exercising some property. Again, by consciousness we know self in a certain mode. Thus in every exercise of perception and consciousness we have a knowledge of SUBSTANCE and QUALITY—not of substance and quality in the abstract, as we shall immediately see, but of individual substances with certain of their qualities. In our knowledge both of self and of objects external to self, we know them as exercising ACTIVE PROPERTY. If we are asked to analyze or explain these cognitions, we answer that we cannot, for they are simple and original, and so cannot be resolved into anything simpler. In much the same way, in every exercise of perception, at least when sight and touch are the organs, we have knowledge of objects as extended, that is, as existing in SPACE. Again, in every exercise of memory we apprehend events as existing in TIME. We have already a cognition, not of body generally, but of a particular body; not of mind in the abstract, but of our own soul; not of space *per se*, but of body in space; not of time separately, but of events happening in time. We know that some will ask in amazement, do we know all this by the senses? We answer that by the senses, considered merely as our bodily organism, we can have no knowledge or idea of anything. What we mean is, that all this is implied in the exercise of mind called forth by the senses.

III. A distinction is to be drawn between the intuitive knowledge of individual objects in the concrete, and the abstract or general notions derived from it by the faculties which discover relations. In consciousness and perception we have a knowledge of substances exercising certain qualities, but we have not by abstraction distinguished the quality from the substance, or formed by comparison a general idea of either substance or quality. In the very cognition of external objects we apprehend them as existing in space; but this is different from the idea of space formed out of this by reflection. In the proper exercise of memory we have a cognition of events happening in time: but the idea of time is formed by abstracting the events from the time in which they have happened. By this distinction we are saved from the manifest absurdity of supposing the infant mind, in its first exercises, to be occupied about substance and quality, time and space, the *ego* and the *non-ego;* these being abstract or general ideas formed—legitimately and necessarily—in mature life, by persons given to reflection.

IV. In the scheme of faculties we have placed the imagination. This faculty in widening its images in time or space, never can image the INFINITE, it can represent merely the very long or very large. So far then as the imaging or picturing power of the mind is concerned, we never can go beyond the finite. But we would take a very imperfect view of human intelligence if we confined it within the limits of its pictorial power. To whatever point we go out in imagination, we are sure that we are not at the limits of existence; nay, we believe that to whatever farther point,we might go, there would be something still farther on. Suppose we were carried to the most distant point which the telescope discloses, we would confidently stretch out our arms, believing in a space beyond into which they might enter, and if our hand were stayed we would believe it to be by a body occupying space. When a sounding line (to borrow an illustration from the German philosophers) does not reach a bottom, we do not conclude that the ocean has no bottom, but in sounding the depths of space and time we are sure that we never could come to their limits. Whence this thought, conviction, belief? We have here come, as it appears to us, to a native law or native belief of the mind. It is a necessary conviction: we cannot be made to think or believe otherwise. Nay it is in a sense universal. No doubt the positive image or conception formed by infants and savages must be very limited, but they believe that, far as it reaches, there is a something beyond. All this shews that there is here a constitutional principle of the mind which we ought not to overlook, and which Locke overlooked, solely because of his antipathy to innate ideas. Such seems to us to be the true psychological nature of the mind's conviction in regard to the infinite. It is not on the one hand, the mere negation to which the British school of philosophers would reduce it. It is not as Sir W. Hamilton represents it, a mere impotence to conceive that existence, that time or space, should cease, but a positive affirmation that they do not cease. On the other hand, it is vastly less than the unconditioned, the absolute, evolved by the speculators of Germany. The mind seeks in vain to embrace the infinite in a positive image, but is constrained to believe, when its efforts fail, that there is a something to which no limits can be put. At the point at which it is obliged to stop, it takes a look, and that look is into infinity.

V. There is a class of faculties discovering relations among the objects that have become known to it. They enable us to take a concrete whole to pieces, and thus furnish ABSTRACT NOTIONS. They enable us to discover resemblances and differences, and thus give GENERAL NOTIONS. When the objects are real on which the abstractions and generalizations are formed, and when the abstractions and generalizations are properly conducted, the abstractions and generalizations also imply realities—not separate realities, but real parts or attributes of a whole and real classes. These faculties are also so constituted that they discover the relation of CAUSE AND EFFECT. In our primitive knowledge, we know substances as possessing active property. Every object being known as possessing active power or property, we are led to believe that this property will act on the needful conditions being supplied; and, again, on being made aware of a new substance being produced, or a substance changed, we are led to trace the production of it to a property either in the substance itself or in some other.

VI. We see how the intuitions stand related to our faculties. They are not separate from our faculties, but the very law of the faculties. Every faculty in its primitive exercise is intuitive, and every true original faculty furnishes cognitions which are intuitive. It is the business of metaphysical philosophy to spread out these roots of the faculties (which are unseen to the common eye) in much the same way as the roots of certain flowers are made visible in glasses. The first and main duty of metaphysical philosophy is to undertake a careful induction, and furnish a rigid expression, of the constitutional principles of the mind.

VII. These intuitions guarantee the truths which they reveal. As to what precise truth is revealed and guaranteed by any given intuition, this is to be ascertained by inquiring of the intuition itself. No *a priori* dogmas can be laid down on such a subject. There is really no other way of determining what are the truths vouched by the intuitions than by asking them one by one what they have to say. But in thus consulting them, we find that each has one or more truths to utter. These are truths which must be assumed in the first instance. Afterwards attempts might be made to disprove them, (Hamilton's Reid, p. 745) ; but this has failed. Experience confirms them daily. Going round the intuitions in this way, we should find that perception guarantees the reality of the external object, and consciousness of self in a particular state, and causation that when there is a real effect there must likewise be a real cause, and the belief in infinity that there is something infinite. By the union of the intuitions of causation and infinity, we are led to a belief in a Great First Cause, who has power in himself and is infinite.

VIII. If this be a correct scheme of Psychology, we are enabled to see the fundamental errors of the schools of philosophy which have proceeded directly or indirectly from Kant.

(1.) They maintain that in perception and consciousness we know the phenomenal and not the real—qualities but not substance—the external world, not as it is in itself, but merely as an unknown something in its relation to the mind. We hold, in opposition to this, that we cognize individual objects, mental and material, as at once phenomenal and real, as substances exercising qualities, as positive and not relative.

(2.) They maintain, that when the mind contemplates matter, there is something in the subjective idea to which there is nothing corresponding in the objective world. To us it appears that the subjective is so constituted, as to be able to know exactly certain qualities in the objective world. It is cognitive, not creative.

(3.) Some of them seem to maintain that, on the occasion of the exercise of the senses, there spring up abstract ideas, such as those of Space and Time, Substance and Quality, Cause and Effect, formed by the Reason or Intelligence. We hold, on the other hand, that intuitively we know individual objects in the concrete. The mind has not an abstract idea of space awakened by the first exercise of the sense of touch—it has merely the knowledge of an event existing in space. The infant does not, upon an event being remembered, immediately entertain an idea of time—it merely has the knowledge of the event having been before the mind at a previous date. The formation of the abstract ideas of space and time comes at a later date through the exercise of the faculties of reflection.

(4.) They maintain that the mind is furnished with certain grand principles which it can use consciously and knowingly, and with which it may set out in *a priori* speculation. We admit that the mind in all its actions proceeds on intuitive and fundamental principles, but we maintain that it employs these spontaneously and unconsciously, without directly knowing what the principles are. In order to know what the principles are, we need to observe and classify the cognitions springing up, or the judgments pronounced, and these are all individual. Hence the futility of the *a priori* method of speculation—hence the need of Induction, in order to arrive at the knowledge of Intuitive Principles, which operate, it is true, independently of all experience, but cannot become known to us, or be employed as philosophic principles, till we have determined their nature, rule, and limits, by careful observation.

SUPPLEMENTARY ARTICLE ON THE PHENOMENAL AND RELATIVITY THEORIES OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE.

There are views prevalent in metaphysical speculation, which are working as much mischief in the present day as the ideal theory did in the time of Berkeley. What we need is a new Thomas Reid, to do in this century what the Scottish philosopher did in the last—to bring back speculation to a modest induction. In the absence of such, we have a remark or two to make in the way of protest.

According to the prevailing metaphysics of this age, the mind perceives as external to itself only PHENOMENA. This is one of the fundamental principles of Kant, and runs through all the philosophies, which have ramified immediately or mediately from that powerful thinker—we cannot add careful observer. Kant goes so far as to maintain that our knowledge even of self or mind is only phenomenal. This phenomenal theory, coupled with the cognate doctrine, that sense is the only source of experiential knowledge (thereby omitting consciousness), and that we are not conscious of self as a distinct object, constitute in our view (this is not the common view) the fundamental errors of the great German metaphysician. In examining this phenomenal theory, it is needful to notice that the word phenomenon has two meanings. In the nomenclature of science, it means a fact to be explained, an individual really known, to be referred to a law or cause unknown. Using the phrase in this sense, we at once admit that the mind does begin with a knowledge of individual phenomena in the concrete, and thence proceeds to analyze the concrete whole into parts (by abstraction), to discover resemblances (generalize), and causes (producing power). We suspect that it is in this sense that many British writers so readily admit the Kantian maxim, that the mind in perception and self-consciousness knows phenomena, and phenomena only. But it is not in this sense that Kant holds the doctrine. According to him, the mind, by the external and internal senses, observes, not real things, but phenomena in the sense of appearances, in regard to which he holds that there is much in them which has no objective reality, and that we cannot tell how much or how little of the remainder is real. Now, this phenomenon seems to us to be a mere modification (and no improvement) of the idea of the older speculators; it is a *tertium quid*, interposing itself officiously between the knowing mind and the thing known. In opposition to this prevailing doctrine, we lay down the maxim, that the mind knows intuitively the thing itself, not all the thing, but the thing in the mode in which it is presented. What we know is phenomenon in the British sense, viz., an individual object or reality. If we are asked to prove this, we answer, that this is a primary cognition, which does not admit of proof by any other cognition clearer, or simpler, or more fundamental. The mind holds the object to be a real object—it may imagine it to be otherwise, but cannot judge or believe it to be otherwise. The mind cannot trust to itself at all if it cannot trust to itself in this. But the mind will, and must trust itself in this respect, and finds its native belief confirmed by daily experience. No doubt, the metaphysician experiences a difficulty in reconciling certain phenomena with the trustworthiness of our original perceptions. (See Art. II.) But some of these difficulties (as, for example, in regard to the reality of heat) have been removed by science, while those that remain are found in departments of nature not yet thoroughly explored, and cannot set aside a doctrine which (though difficult to unfold precisely) can appeal to our very intuitions.

It seems very clear, that unless the mind begins with realities, with things in its primary knowledge, it can never reach these by any logical or intellectual process.

In the Kantian system, the real, external—and we may add, internal, disappears more and more as we advance; and when we rise beyond the categories which are the rules by which we judge of phenomena, to the ideas of pure reason which give a unity to the categories—we have left it behind altogether. Having begun with a shadow, we must end with a shadow becoming fainter and fainter, or rather with a reflection of that shadow. But let us begin with a reality, and apply the understanding to it according to logical laws; and we shall find that we are not led into contradictions nor scepticism, but conducted to farther truths (not however to all truths) also implying a reality.

Somewhat allied to the doctrine of the Phenomenality, is that of the RELATIVITY of human knowledge. Sir W. Hamilton has shewn that there has been a doctrine of relativity held from the beginning of speculation down to the present time. We might argue that this circumstance does not prove the dogma to be sound, any more than the maintenance from an ancient date of the ideal theory of perception proves that theory to be correct. But instead of urging this, we aver that the generally entertained doctrine of relativity (which contains a truth often vaguely expressed) is not the same as that elaborated with such analytic skill and logical power by Sir W. Hamilton. It is known to Sir William, that Reid did not uniformly hold the doctrine in the sense of his learned commentator, for he says, (Hamilton's Reid, p. 313,) that our "senses give us a direct and a distinct notion of the primary qualities, and inform us what they are in themselves."

As Sir William Hamilton has not fully unfolded his theory, we are not in circumstances to examine it fairly. If we are misinterpreting him, to retract these objections will give us pleasure—such as we have not felt in advancing them. We confess that we have found a difficulty in understanding precisely what is meant by the phrases employed. Our knowledge is said to be in itself, and of the phenomenal, relative, conditioned, finite. "Our knowledge of mind and of matter is relative—conditioned—relatively conditioned." "All that we know is phænomenal—phænomenal of the unknown." (Discussions, p. 608.) Do these phrases always denote or imply the same thing? Is the relative necessarily phenomenal? Is the relative necessarily conditioned? May there not be relations which are not conditions? Is every thing relative necessarily finite? God stands in a relation to his works; but this does not appear to make these works stand to him in the relation of a condition. It does not make God finite that he stands in a relation to creation.

Man's knowledge is limited; but it is as his sense and range of vision are limited. The eye sees so much when it looks out on the broad ocean, but there is more that it does not see. So it is with man's mental apprehension. Man does not, cannot know everything; nay, he does not seem to know all about any one thing, material, mental, or Divine. Of the many properties possessed by body or spirit, (not to speak of the Divine Spirit,) he knows only a few. His knowledge of no one thing is absolute, in the sense of being a complete knowledge of that one thing.—Still his knowledge is not of relations, limits, conditions, appearances, but of things to a certain extent, and as presented to him. And this knowledge, though contracted, may be true and sound, so far as it goes, and if he knew more, it would not set aside or modify our previous knowledge, but merely expand it.

In order to express that man's knowledge is confined, some writers say that we know objects merely in relation to our faculties. But they do not thereby mean, that man knows merely phenomena and not things, not things themselves, but things under a relation. They mean simply that we have not faculties to know all knowledge, and that things are known only so far as our faculties are constituted to attain such knowledge.

True there must always be a relation between the knowing and the known. This must be true of Divine as well as human knowledge. But it does not therefore follow that man's primary and intuitive knowledge is of the relation. In many cases, it is the knowledge which constitutes the relation, and not the relation which is the object of the knowledge.

On the very grounds on which Sir William Hamilton argues so powerfully that our knowledge is original and not inferred, immediate and not through an idea, do we argue that it is positive and not merely phenomenal or relative. No man has shewn so clearly that there are cognitions at first hand—which, as the elements of our mental constitution, " must by us be accepted as true."—(Note A. p. 743 of edit. of Reid.) But what is meant by accepting them as true? Surely it is accepting the truth which they certify. But does not the mind in sense-perception hold the object to be a real object? Does it not hold the same in reference to its knowledge of self by consciousness? Does it not hold in both these cases that it knows the thing, and not an appearance, and not a relation between that thing and the mind, and between one thing and another? If we cannot trust our faculties in this, we can trust them in nothing. " If mendacity be admitted of some of our mental dictates, we cannot vindicate veracity of any. If one be delusive, so may all:—falsus in uno falsus in omnibus. Absolute scepticism is here the legitimate conclusion."

Speaking not of the relativity of knowledge, but of objects, we are ever noticing relations among different objects, or different parts of the same object. But we know these as relations among objects known. It is because we know things (so much of them) that we know the relations of things. Thus we know body as at one and the same time substance and quality, and can thus cognize the relation between them. We know substance as having power, and can thus trace its relation to its effects. We know the object primarily as in a certain mode, or exercising a certain property, but we would not say that the thing was unknown, because it thus appeared to us, but that it was so far known, as under this mode, or in the exercise of this property.

The result at which we arrive by these speculations is not " nescience," but a limited knowledge, not a " learned ignorance," which may be a very proud ignorance, but a humble learning, grateful for what it knows, but ever awed with the conviction that what it knows is little in comparison of what it does not know, and cannot know, in this present world; is but a little sphere of light in the heart of an infinitude of (to man) darkness. Man is, after all, but gathering pebbles by the shore of the ocean of truth, which lies before him unexplored and unexplorable—still what he gathers are pebbles, and not the mere appearance of pebbles, or pebbles in relation to him. Let us value what we know as trustworthy, but feel, meanwhile, that we dare not dictate and dogmatize as to topics which lie in the unknowable region which surrounds us above and below, before and behind, on the right hand and the left. " The secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children."

The most extreme representative of this school is Professor Ferrier, in his Institutes of Metaphysic. The work professes to be a demonstration, but does not at its commencement announce any definitions nor axioms, to let us know what is assumed, and in what sense. His first proposition is:—" Along with whatever intelligence knows, it must, as the ground or condition of its knowledge, have some cognizance of itself." Does this proposition announce itself as intuitively true?

We do not admit it, till the word condition is explained. His Second Proposition erected on the First, is:—"The object of knowledge, whatever it may be, is always something more than what is naturally or usually regarded as the object. It always is, and must be, the object with the addition of one's self—object *plus* subject —thing, or thought, *mecum*. Self is an integral and essential part of every object of cognition." We admit as a psychological fact, that the consciousness of self coexists with every mental act, but so also does the exercise of certain senses, as the sense of our bodily frame, and the sense of touch; but surely this does not shew that our cognition of an object, say of a distant hill, is a cognition of this hill *plus* a sense of the eye with which we look at it. Consciousness runs through all our mental states, and among others our ratiocinations; but this does not prove that the object before the mind in reasoning is this premiss *plus* self, and this other premiss *plus* self, and this conclusion *plus* self, and this relation of premiss and conclusion *plus* self. Carry out the principle, and the very apprehension of the arguments of the "Institutes" becomes an apprehension of these arguments *plus* self. This lands us logically in an idealism, in which not only the material world, but all truth—the very existence and being of a God—ceases to be a reality, independent of the contemplative mind, and becomes an object *mecum*. It is all true that we know ourselves when we know external objects, but we know external objects as different from ourselves, and having a reality independent of ourselves. The external object is known along with the internal self, but is known as an object independent of self, and not as an object *plus* self. The cognitions of self, and of not-self, coexist, but the cognitions apprehend two objects as having a separate existence. The one of these propositions is as certain as the other, and the one cannot be used to set aside the other. It is one of the conditions of the legitimate use of first principles, (as stated by Hamilton, edit. of Reid, p. 747,) "that we embrace all [and not merely some one of] the original data of consciousness." When we have removed the first two propositions, the castle of cards must fall. We have noticed that in rearing his fabric, Mr. F. is ever, without acknowledgment, assuming principles, which are not clearer than those which they are employed to set aside. His Counter Propositions are at times mere *foils*, constructed by himself to set off his own argument; but they may have this good effect, that they will compel psychologists (of whom he has a great hatred) to observe the mind more carefully, and enunciate the facts more accurately. The book is written cleverly, in the magazine style, and has not a few literary beauties, and will be attractive to some as an exhibition of speculative ingenuity. But our hope is, that it will be regarded by the sober British thinkers as a *reductio ad absurdum* of the whole style of speculation, of which it is a specimen. If this is not the effect, the next phenomenon appearing in the philosophic firmament must be a Hume or a Fichte.

ART. VII.—OPERATION OF CAUSE AND EFFECT IN THE HUMAN MIND.—(PAGE 273.)

We have endeavoured (Art. III.) to point out the way in which the principle of cause and effect operates in the material universe: it is by the action of corporeal substances upon each other, according to their properties. A material substance is in itself passive. Apart from something external to itself, it will never change. It seems to be a characteristic of matter, that all its operations proceed from the action of one substance upon another. Hence it is in its very nature dependent.

Herein is the activity and the independence of spirit distinguished from the passiveness and dependence of matter. We hold—we cannot but hold—that the principle of cause and effect reigns in mind as in matter. Our intuitive belief in causation leads us to this conclusion. It is on account of the existence of such a connexion that we can anticipate the future in regard to the actions of intelligent and voluntary beings, as well as in regard to changes in material substances. It is upon it that we ground our confidence in the Character and Word of God. But there is an important difference between the manner in which this principle operates in body and in spirit. In all proper mental operations, the causes and the effects lie both within the mind. Mind is a self-acting substance, and hence its activity and independence.

We acknowledge that things, *ab extra*, do operate upon the human mind. In respect, for instance, to the sensations produced by sensible objects, the mind is passive, though even here the existence of the sensation implies a mental capacity belonging to the mind itself.* But in respect of its proper functions, the mind is self-acting.† Changes are produced within the mind by the mind itself. These changes are produced according to mental laws, and which are the rules or principles of the faculties or the attributes of the agent.

We have said that changes are produced in the mind by means of the faculties of the mind. In investigating the operations of the human mind, the difference between their mode of action and that of material substances has not always been kept in view. Hence, in particular, the error that pervades the system of Dr. Thomas Brown, who speaks of all our ideas as mental states, produced by the immediately preceding state, according to the laws of simple and relative suggestions, without taking into account the active and abiding faculties of the soul, which (and not the mere contiguous state) are the main causes of any given mental state. We say the main causes, or rather the main element in any given cause; for in mind, as in matter, causes have always somewhat of complexity. It is the same quality or power exercised in the same circumstances.

We have seen (B. ii. sect. 1) that in the operation of cause in the material universe, there must be the presence of two or more bodies. We have now said that, in this respect, mind differs essentially from matter. But still there is so far an analogy between the operation of causes in both. In mental, as in material phenomena, there is a certain complexity in the causes. The whole cause of any given mental state is not, as Dr. Brown constantly assumes, the immediately preceding state. When we feel our persons to be in danger, and resolve on adopting steps to avoid the peril, it is not the mere perception of the danger that is the cause of the succeeding volition. There is most assuredly in the cause, not only the sense of the danger, but, as a more important element, the power of will. When, on hearing a falsehood told, we feel a strong moral indignation, there is something more in the cause of this indignation than a mere conception of the falsehood; there is a faculty of the mind which leads us to abhor that which is evil. In short, the true cause of any given mental phenomenon, its unconditional antecedent, which will always produce it, and without which it cannot recur, is composed of two things—the immediately preceding state, and a mental power or faculty. Should the latter be held as truly the cause, then the other falls to be regarded as the circumstances, in the common aphorism, that the same cause produces the same effect in the same circumstances. In many cases the cause is still more complex, and embraces other elements—as, for instance, the previous habits of the soul; nay, the very casual associations of the mind in all its previous history, and the forgotten incidents of childhood, may be swaying more or less powerfully the actual state produced at any given moment.

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* Hence in all action of body on mind, and of mind on body—in all perception, for instance, and muscular movement—there is a *double cause.* There is body and mind in one state followed by the body and mind in another state. This principle followed out may throw some light both on the philosophy of perception and of voluntary motion.

† "Every body which is moved from without is soulless; but that which is moved from within of itself possesses a soul—such, then, is the very nature of soul."—(Plato's Phædrus.)

The non-observance of these important distinctions has led to much confusion in the controversy between Libertarians and Necessarians. Pseudo-necessarians, perverting the proper doctrine of philosophical necessity, have represented man as having all his thoughts and feelings determined by an external cause, and thus as the mere creature of circumstances. Libertarians, in opposing the doctrine, have commonly argued as if all Necessarians held the doctrine as now stated. Nor have Necessarians, even of the highest order, been sufficiently careful to guard the language employed by them. Afraid of making admissions to their opponents, we believe that none of them has fully developed the phenomena of human freedom. Even Edwards ridicules the idea of the faculty or power of will, or the soul, in the use of that power, determining its own volitions.* Now, we hold it to be an incontrovertible fact, and one of great importance, that the true determining cause ot every given volition, is not any mere anterior incitement, but the very soul itself, by its inherent power of will. He has not scanned the full phenomena which consciousness discloses, who denies the real potency of will—a potency above all special volitions—and the true power exercised in producing these volitions.

True Necessarians should learn in what way to hold and defend their doctrine. Let them disencumber themselves of all that doubtful argument, derived from man being supposed to be swayed by the most powerful motive. We must ever hold, that a mere incitement can become a motive only so far as sanctioned by the will; so that it is not so much the incentive that determines the will, as the will that adopts the incentive. Let Necessarians found their doctrine on the circumstance, that the principle of cause and effect reigns in the domains of mind as in the territories of matter. Let them also be careful to show that this principle, as a mental principle, works *ab intra.* In proceeding in this manner, they may found their doctrine on one of the very intellectual intuitions of man's mind which leads us, in mental as in material phenomena, to anticipate the same effects to follow the same causes. Their defence, too, might not be injured, but rather strengthened, by their dropping the word necessity, as ambiguous, to say the least of it, and as unhappily associated with the idea of restraint laid on the will, such as mere causation does not and cannot lay upon what we regard as its inherent and essential freedom.

It was only after finishing this edition down to this place, that we have had an opportunity of reading Mr. Bledsoe's Examination of Edwards and his Theodicy. He thinks that the statements put forth in this treatise, in regard to causation and freedom, as both found in the will, are contradictory. It is much easier to assert than to prove this, more especially when the critic does not announce the principle of contradiction. (See *supra*, p. 278.) Mr. B. has made his use of some unguarded expressions used in the first edition of this work, but which had disappeared from the later British editions before the Theodicy was published; we do not think that the statements now made are inconsistent; but even though thoy were, this would shew merely that we had failed to give a correct expression of the mental facts, and would not prove that both causation and freedom were not to be found in the will, or that these two principles contradicted each other. Mr. B. deals much more in the criticism of others, than in the exposition of his own system. In such a subject as the freedom of the will, it is easy to start objections, but not so easy to evolve a doctrine free from all difficulties. Mr. B. has landed himself in many. In order to support his theory, he is obliged to strip causation of its very peculiarities, to make effect mean simply what is effected, and the proposition that every effect has a cause, a mere truism or identical proposition, (see page 66 of Examination of Edwards);—thereby setting himself against the representation of every school of philosophers, whether it be that of Locke or Leibnitz, of Reid, Kant, Brown, or J. S. Mill. (See this defective view noticed in Art. III. p. 523.) The principle of cause and effect is, that whenever we notice anything new or a change, there we look for a cause. But here we have something new, here we have a change, say a mental action, say this volition, and for this we must anticipate a cause. Mr. B. is obliged to deny that cause and effect reach to actions of the mind, thereby setting himself against not only an intuition of our nature, but against experience, which can furnish statistics and anticipations of mental actions, and these voluntary actions—such as crimes, as certain as any physical statistics—such as bills of mortality, and all this surely proves that causation must reign in mind as in matter. According to his scheme, there can be no guarantee, even in the power of God, against the very saints in glory falling away, or even—we use the language reluctantly—in the continuance of the Divine Excellence. He is obliged to acknowledge (Exam. p. 225) that consciousness cannot say, as to any mental act, whether it is, or is not caused, for all that we can be conscious of is the act. But then he says, we are conscious of action, and a thing which acts cannot be caused. There is an obvious mistake here, and indeed in his whole view of action and passion. Surely that which is acted on may itself have power of action.

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* See throughout Sect. ii. of Part II., on Freedom of Will.

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